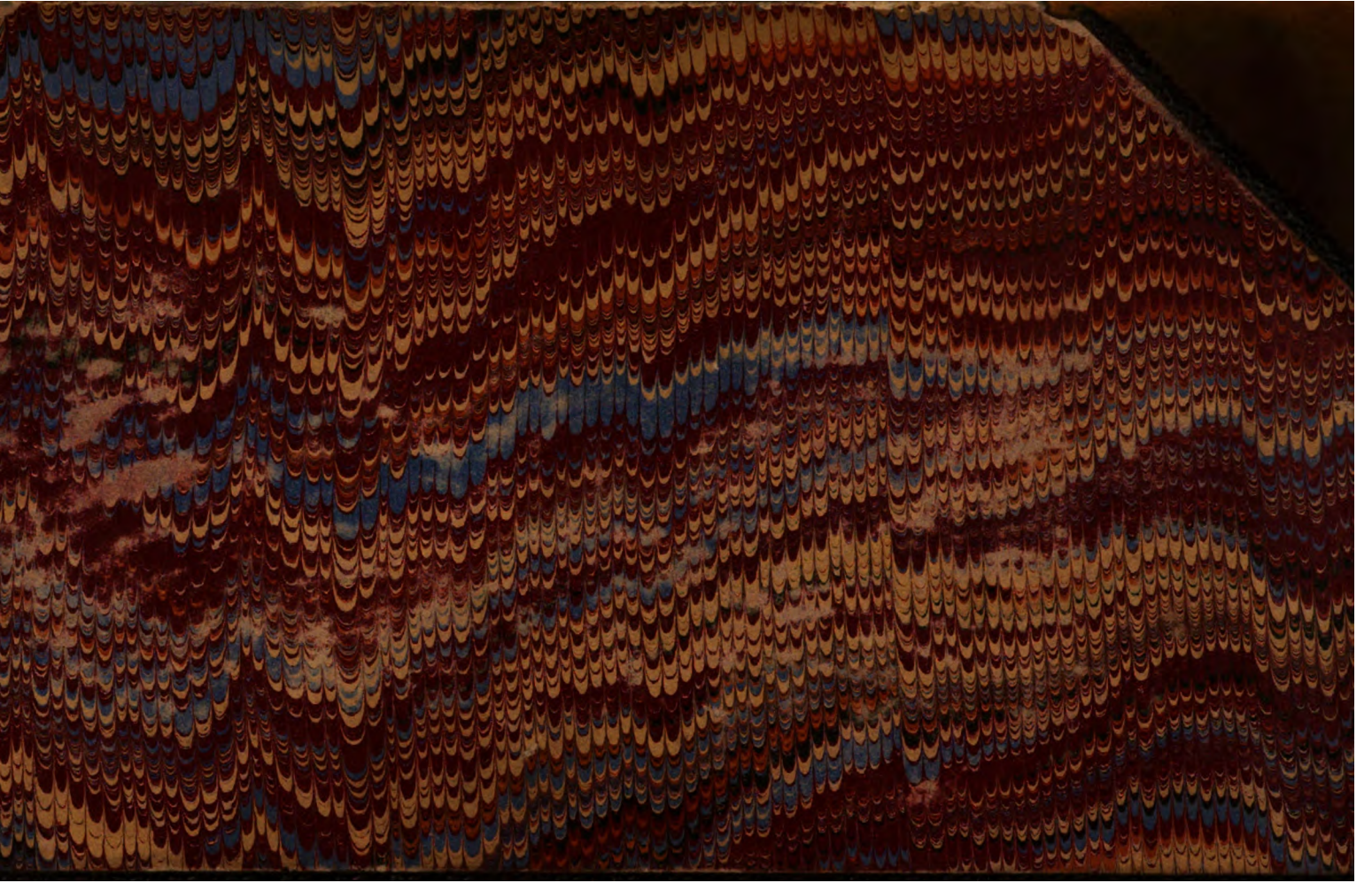

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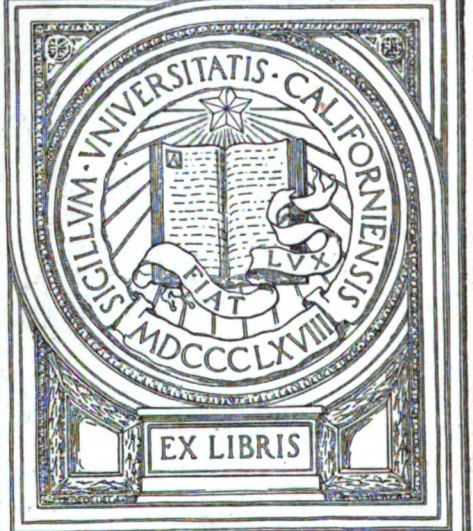

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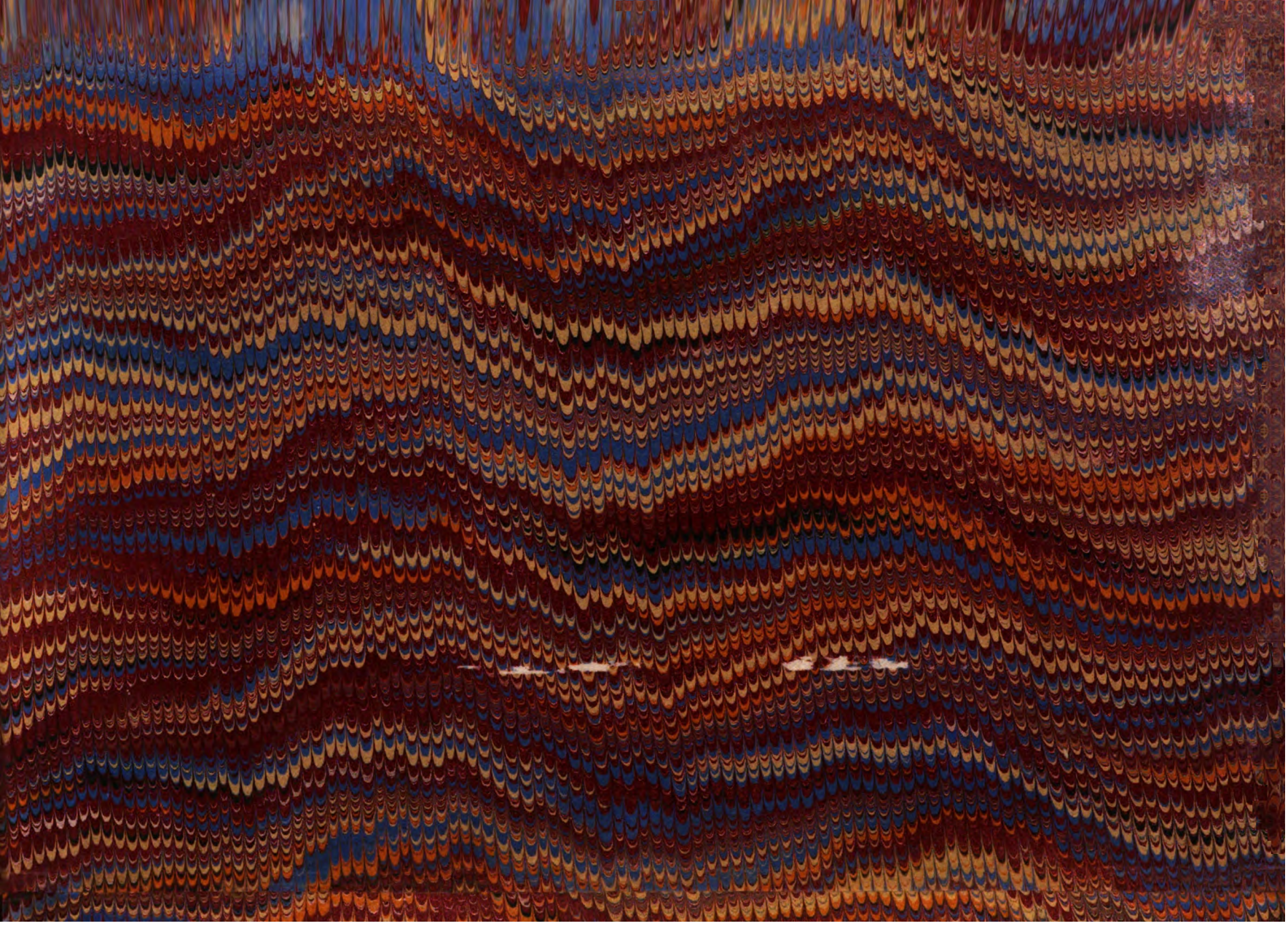

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THE

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GEORGE NEWNES, LIMITED, 3—12, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

"HELD BY A THREAD." By CHAS. E. MARSHALL.

(By permission of C. E. Clifford & Co., the Publishers, 21, Haymarket, London, W.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxxiv. JULY, 1907. No. 199.

COSTUME IN ART.

IN the representation of a subject the painter has the advantage of the sculptor in that the latter must confine himself to form, while the painter has both line and colour. Acting on this fundamental principle you will find two great schools amongst modern painters. One of these schools believes that any subject, however dull, however trite—repulsive even—is worthy of being depicted if it shall be shown in such a manner as to reveal the painter's temperament or peculiar technique. The other school, on the contrary, believes that to make a picture the painter must have, as it were, a picture in his mind. The scene that is uninteresting in real life does not become more interesting by being transferred to canvas. A painter of this persuasion casts about in his travels or in his mind's eye for combinations of colour and objects which will make a picture. To him a picture that is not generally admired, which gives no pleasure to the beholder, that happens not to be interesting in technical accomplishment, is hardly worth being painted. Grey, dull objects or scenes, sombrely apparelled men and women, such as we see for the most part around us in the world to-day, have little attraction for the painter who desires to please his generation.

"I choose scenes of colour," remarked Meissonier to a friend, "because I am a colourist. If I were to paint the people of to-day I might just as well paint in monochrome."

"The little incident," writes Mr. C. E.

"ATTENDANCE INCLUDED." By LEON MORAN.

(By permission of C. Klackner, 2, Haymarket, London, Publisher of the large Engraving.)

"THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN." By ARTHUR BECKINGHAM.

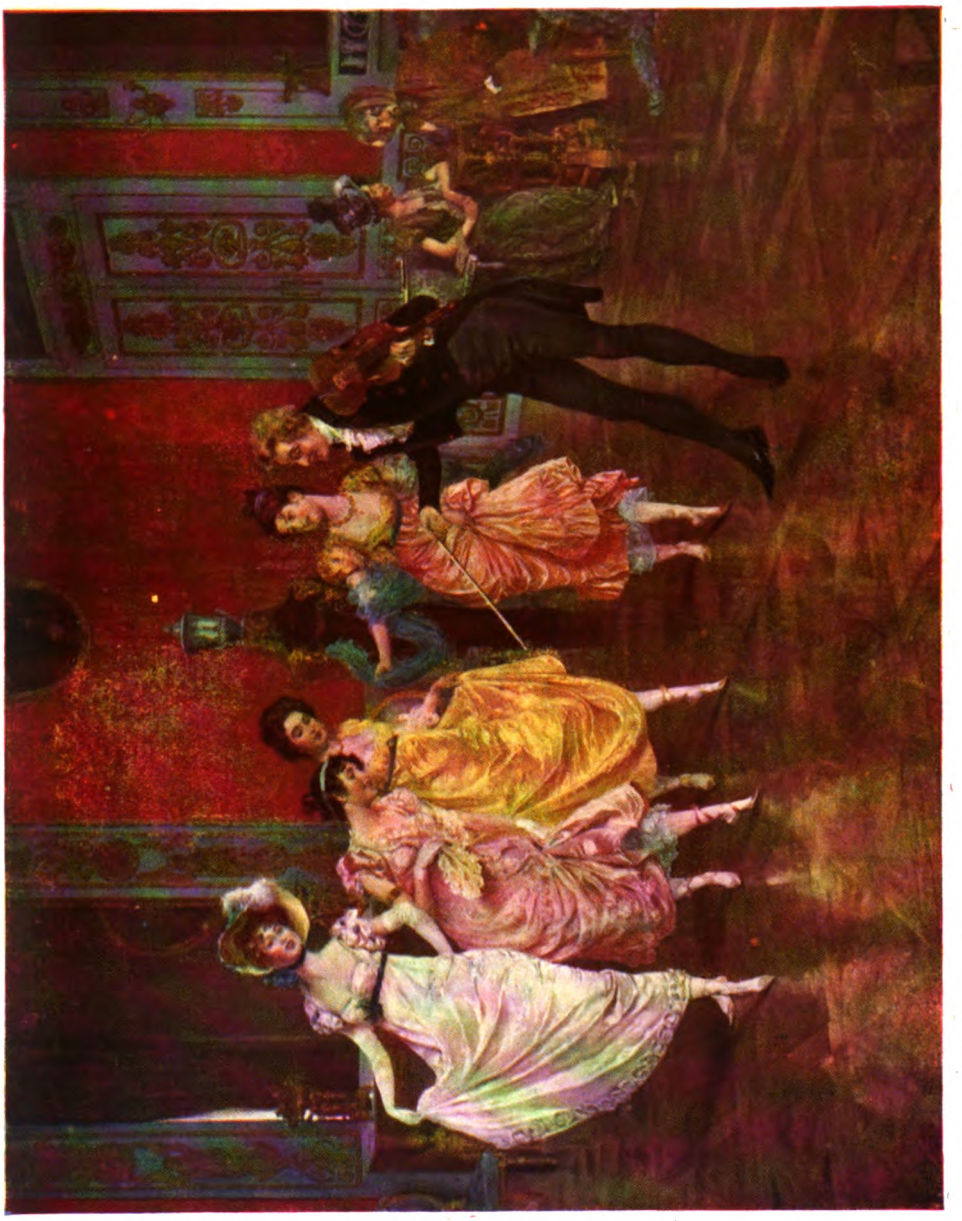
(By permission of C. E. Clifford & Co., the Publishers, 21, Haymarket, London, W.

Marshall to us, "illustrated in my picture, 'Held by a Thread,' was suggested to me quite by accident. I was staying at an old manor house in Wiltshire, where many of my subjects of this nature were painted, and one morning, in the room I had arranged as a studio, with my canvases and two models before me, I was quite at a loss for a subject. After having posed my models in different attitudes, all of which failed to please me, I left the room in despair. On my return a little while afterwards I found that my two figures had by chance placed themselves in precisely the attitude I have depicted them in. Here was my subject, and the picture was started at once!"

"THE BOYHOOD OF RALEIGH." By SIR J. E. MILLAIS, P.R.A.

But scenes and situations that would prove not unworthy of the painter's art are frequently lighted on. Is not "as pretty as a picture" an everyday expression in the English language? Not always, however, is there present (as in this instance) an artist capable of seizing upon the crucial moment and with deft and ready brush immortalizing it upon canvas. Mr. Marshall here shows us the interior of a commodious and well-lit room. Reclining near the spacious lattice-window, through which we catch a glimpse of blue skies and smiling meadows, we see once more the old-as-time yet ever youthful pair. She with downcast eyes and demure expression is skilfully repairing the rent that some mischance has torn in the lace flounce of his cuff, while he gazes with ill-concealed admiration full in the lady's face. Held by a thread—no more; but even a thread will bind for ever those who have no wish to part.

How much the artist gains by availing himself of the more florid and elaborate costume of other days is clearly shown in this and the accompanying pictures. Next to a period, a pose, and a comely model, a happy title is, perhaps, of the greatest importance. The picture by Mr. Leon Moran is a striking illustration of this. Mr. Moran is an American painter and etcher who, with



"THE DANCING HOUR." By L. SCHMUTZLER.

(By permission of C. Klackner, 2, Haymarket, London, Publisher of the large Engraving.)

his father and mother, has long devoted himself to a charming *genre* of work dealing with the American colonial period. Here we see the interior of a country inn. None of the appurtenances which we are wont to connect in our mind with such a homestead are lacking. The old-fashioned chimney-piece, deep-recessed grate, and leaded windows testify to the fact that this is no modern erection, while the antiquated candlesticks, bellows, and crockery have probably done service for several generations of occupants. The youthful traveller, doubtless on his way to one of the great colonial capitals, has paused for midday refreshment. That he is not too well blessed with this world's goods is shown by the red bandanna handkerchief tied up on the floor which doubtless contains all the traveller's belongings. Having partaken of the simple frugal fare he calls for his bill. The pretty handmaiden who has been waiting upon him once more puts in an appearance with the written reckoning.

Whatever misgiving he may feel that he has been overcharged for his entertainment, the little item, "attendance included," puts him in good humour again, and he is ready to consider the banquet cheap indeed. Yet the picture was finished and all but sent away for exhibition before the happy inspiration of the title, "Attendance Included," occurred to the artist. Much of its popularity in America is doubtless attributable to the felicitous name.

The story of the return of the prodigal son is almost as old as literature itself. It has various phases, infinite variations, but the essentials of the little drama are ever the same. There is, for instance, the return of Dr. Primrose's son George in the "Vicar of Wakefield," and Mr. Arthur Beckingham, in the picture we have reproduced, "The Prodigal's Return," has gone to the same period to clothe and equip his characters.

"BETWEEN TWO FIRES." By F. D. MILLET.

Here we see the grounds of a country parsonage. The clergyman and his still youthful wife, sitting beneath the spreading branches of an ancient tree, have been engaged in their several occupations. They have been communing perhaps over their long-absent son, who in a moment of pique or passion had rashly left the peaceful haven in which his

"GOOD-BYE." By HERBERT DICKSEE.
(By permission of C. Klackner, 2, Haymarket, London, Publisher of the large Engraving.)

childhood had been spent to seek his fortune in the great world outside, and speculating anew as to where he was and how he fared, whether his native soil still held him, or whether in far-off lands, alone and friendless, he laboured wearily to eke out a scanty subsistence. Or was he dead? And should they never again listen to that still-loved voice which had, in happier times, been at once their solace and their joy? Long had they waited his return, hoping against hope that the wanderer would soon weary of the great battle of life, in which every man's hand is against his neighbour's, and return penitent to the fold; but hope deferred maketh the heart sick, and years of waiting had wrought the lethargy of leaden-hued despair.

Then suddenly, as thus they muse, the rusty hinges of the garden gate creak and swing, footsteps are heard on the gravelled drive. It is not, however, the tread of buoyant youth, but the slow, dragging footsteps that betoken the uneasy mind. Then a figure comes into view, altered no doubt, but still familiar, and with a catch in her breath the mother springs to her feet. For the prodigal has indeed returned. We doubt not that a reconciliation was subsequently effected, and, to finish the story in the accepted way, that "all lived happily ever after."

"I was led to the conception of the picture," writes the artist, Mr. Arthur Beckingham, "by the sight of an old house and garden in Essex, near Chelmsford. When I saw the place I thought that it would make a good setting for a domestic drama of some sort, so I made a study of the scene. Afterwards I thought over its possibilities, until the subject of the prodigal suggested itself. Of course, the picture was not painted on the spot, but I was able to keep very closely to my study in working out the subject. The story of the prodigal has always been a favourite one with painters, and, as it lends itself to so many different kinds of treatment, I think it will continue to attract artists for as long as subjects are painted."

It was the glamour of distant lands, the thirst for adventure, that had led the prodigal forth, and Millais, in his painting, "The Boyhood of Raleigh," shows us another lad of tender years whose fancies are being animated by such narrations of the perils that may be endured and the triumphs that may be achieved in the lands beyond the seas.

Few painters could rival Millais's wonderful skill in depicting children, and it was this especial faculty of his that evoked from a distinguished German critic a panegyric that as a revelation of Continental opinion of English art is by no means devoid of interest.

"This same stringent painter of character," he wrote, "commands that soft light brush of a painter of children as few others do. No one since Reynolds and Gainsborough has painted with so much character as Millais the dazzling freshness of English youth, the energetic pose of a boy's head, or the beauty of an English girl—a thing which stands in this world alone."

There is in the present picture no exaggeration or straining after effect. The story is told with a simplicity and natural charm that is altogether delightful. We see young Raleigh and his companion reclining on the quaint stone pier of a Devonshire seaport as, with eyes wide-spread in wonder, they listen to the marvellous tales of travel and adventure that fall from the old sea-dog's lips. Those were stirring times indeed. The great mysterious East had not yet been opened up to English commerce, and all that was known about the distant lands which lay beyond the far horizon was necessarily limited to the vague accounts given by those few stragglers who had by some chance or another found their way thither. No wonder, then, that all such information was eagerly assimilated by those at home who dearly longed to see the cross of St. George bravely flying in those unknown seas. It is to be doubted, however, whether the gallant adventurer ever obtained a more appreciative audience than the present, and it is probable that his narrations are more than usually richly embellished with those wild improbabilities and reckless inconsistencies on which the youthful mind ever loves to dwell in rapturous contemplation.

A pathetic interest attaches itself to the picture in the fact that Millais's two sons, George and Everett, were the originals of Raleigh and his companion. Both are now deceased, but the fair one died before he had attained to man's estate, and his death was said to be the grief of his father's life.

A different order of painting altogether is seen in Mr. G. L. Schmutzler's "The Dancing Hour." It is more varied both in theme and colouring. The dancing lesson has served a hundred painters, and here we find it pressed once more into active service. The four ladies are certainly very shapely, and their attitudes are of the utmost grace, while their tutor himself is not lacking in those attributes

which go to make up the outwardly pleasing man. Without doubt, he considers himself a very fine fellow indeed, and the gesture with which he directs his violin-bow towards the fair pupil's pedal extremities is altogether superb. It is a real pleasure to come across a roomful of people all of whom are so thoroughly well-pleased with themselves.

There are few artists who have had a more varied experience of life than Mr. F. D. Millet, whose painting, "Between Two Fires," we have reproduced. Mr. Millet is an American by birth, the son of a Massachusetts doctor, and started life as a drummer-boy in the Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac, subsequently being promoted to the rank of assistant contract-surgeon in the same corps. Then he drifted into journalism and became the correspondent of the *Daily News* during the Russo-Turkish War. Art was the next to engage his attention, and some time was spent at Antwerp studying in the art schools of that city.

Mr. Millet has the comedian's eye for a humorous situation, and many of his canvases depict the embarrassing situations in which the austere Puritan occasionally finds himself placed. In the present instance we see a stern-looking gentleman, somewhat sour of countenance, attired in a steeple-jack hat, black cloak, and wide white collar. He appears to be anxious to return thanks before falling to upon the substantial repast that is set before him, but finds his attention diverted by the two saucy serving-maids, who, amused at his idiosyncrasies of attire and behaviour, keep up a running fire of searching comment and good-humoured raillery. It is a pity that the gentleman's harsh and rigid creed prevents him from enjoying a situation that to other men would be the reverse of disagreeable.

The picture, which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1892, was purchased under the Chantrey Trust, and now hangs in the national collection at Millbank.

In the next picture, "Good-bye," by the well-known artist, Mr. Herbert Dicksee, it may be mentioned that for the colouring of this picture Mr. Dicksee is not responsible. The tints, as they appear in our reproduction, were chosen by another artist, a great admirer of Mr. Dicksee's work. Mr. Dicksee made an original study in colours in which the girl's dress was pink, but in a second sketch he altered it to pale blue.

The importance of the colour scheme to a picture is, of course, very considerable. The tone of a pigment may make all the difference between success and failure; a slight variation of tint may write an entirely new meaning into a composition. One reads of artists who, after long attempts to find the colour which they have intuitively felt to be essential to their picture, were at length driven to give up the search in despair. But one day the accidental upsetting of a glass of claret, or some such trifling incident, has given them the key to what they had so long been seeking. An interesting question here presents itself. What would the masterpieces in our national galleries look like if they had been painted in entirely different schemes of colour? Would Titian's "Ganymede" be any the less impressive if the flowing scarf depicted therein had been coloured blue instead of red? Or should we recognise Rembrandt's "Old Lady" if one day we were to find that the sober browns and blacks of her costume had been discarded for garments of a more flamboyant hue?

We have in the present picture another theme that has inspired the brushes of many hundreds of artists, but it is too good a subject to become wearisome by repetition, and each delineator of the little tragedy but serves to show it in another aspect. A maiden, clad in flowing pink, is taking a last wistful look at the old home which is to be hers no longer. To-morrow the voice of the stranger will be heard in those ancient halls, hallowed by so many sweet associations of childhood, and so to-day she takes a long farewell of those favourite haunts to which time and circumstance have alike endeared her. The faithful hound she clasps by the collar looks as if he, too, understood and shared with her the fond regret of parting. "The garden background," writes Mr. Dicksee to THE STRAND, "was taken from Penshurst Place, in Kent. The deerhound was etched from my old hound, Sir Brian, who won many prizes at dog shows, and was my constant companion for thirteen years."

The Scarlet Runner.

VIII.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE RED-WHISKERED MAN.

By C. N. and A. M. Williamson.

Author of "The Lightning Conductor," "My Friend the Chauffeur," etc.

"WHAT a queer place for a rich man's relatives to live!" thought Christopher Race, looking up in a puzzled way at the tall, dilapidated house in the Jewish quarter of Amsterdam, in front of which he stopped Scarlet Runner.

Christopher, who by special arrangement and extra payment had brought the motor across from England on the night boat to the Hook of Holland, had spun along good clinker roads, bowling his car and his one passenger into Amsterdam in time for a late breakfast. That meal he had taken at an hotel, while his employer (unknown to him a few days before) had driven off in a cab to the house of a relative, who was expected to join the party for a week's run through Holland. Instructions were that, after breakfast and a couple of hours' rest, Christopher was to call at a certain address.

Here he was, then, in front of the house, an ancient, secretive-looking building that nodded forward as if its time to tumble into ruin might come at any moment; and a vague suspicion of mystery in his errand suddenly stole into Christopher's mind.

The young man who had engaged him and Scarlet Runner—the young man with the features, bearing, and manner of an Englishman, the accent of Oxford, and the name of a Dutchman, Van Cortlandt—had seemed frankness itself. He had insisted (as he was a stranger to Christopher and the car was to be taken out of England) upon paying fifty pounds in advance. He had been an agreeable companion during the run, showing himself a cosmopolitan in knowledge of the world, of literature, and of drama. Christopher was inclined to like and admire his passenger, and fancied that the Dutch cousin to be visited in Amsterdam would turn out a merchant prince. Yet this was the cousin's house; the hour appointed had passed, and young Mr. van Cortlandt seemed in no hurry to appear with his relative.

It was a house, Christopher told himself, where things might happen; and wasn't it, now he came to think of it, a little odd that Van Cortlandt had asked him to wait without sending in word or announcing his presence in any way?

When he had sat in front of the house for a quarter of an hour Christopher stopped the motor; and it was just after he had done this that the door opened and a girl came out. She wore a blue tissue veil draped over her hat, and the long ends fluttered gracefully behind her in the slight breeze. Christopher

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"THE DOOR OPENED AND A GIRL CAME OUT."

had only a dim impression of the features behind the waving azure cloud, but he was conscious that a pair of large dark eyes regarded him, and the slim alertness of the figure that tripped down the steps to the street assured him that they were the eyes of a young woman. She was dressed in a neat, inconspicuous tailor suit of dark grey, and carried in her hand a roll of music in a leather case. Perhaps it was vanity on Christopher's part, but he fancied that the large eyes glimmering alluringly through the veil rested upon Scarlet Runner with interest and even curiosity. He watched the girl as she walked to the corner, and at the end of the street saw her hail a cab. Immediately afterwards a man who had been staring aimlessly at the bottles in a cheap hairdresser's shop on the other side of the way became abruptly aware that he had been wasting time. He hurried off briskly in the direction the girl had taken and also found a cab, so promptly as to suggest the idea that it had been waiting his orders.

"Doesn't look like the sort of fellow who could afford to drive," Christopher said to himself, faintly interested, and so far forgetting his own affairs for the instant that it was a surprise suddenly to see Mr. Ean van Cortlandt standing in the street.

How he had got there Christopher was not sure, but one thing was certain: he had not come out of the building in front of which Scarlet Runner had been waiting for nearly half an hour. There was a vague impression in the mind of Scarlet Runner's owner that his employer had run down the steps of a house two doors farther on, but his thoughts had been so occupied with the doings of others at the instant that he could not have sworn to this had it been to save his life or Van Cortlandt's.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting," said the other. "It was unavoidable." He paused for a moment, evidently having something more he wanted to say and not knowing how best to say it.

Christopher looked at his employer with a new criticism now that that faint suspicion of mystery was growing in his head; but there was nothing secretive in the clean-cut, intelligent face, with its large, thoughtful grey eyes, set rather wide apart, and its broad forehead, round which the short-cut but curly brown hair grew in a singularly attractive way. The well-shaped head was finely set on the shoulders, and the tall figure, though so slim as to seem boyish, was erect and soldierly. Christopher could not imagine this young man, of about his own age, to be one who would engage in underhand dealings.

"And I'm sorry, too," Mr. van Cortlandt went on, "that all my plans are changed. My cousin, who was to have gone with me on this motor trip, can't go—family affliction, something quite sudden; and that being the case, I feel it would be hard-hearted, as well as gloomy, to make the tour without him. However, you sha'n't suffer in any way by the change, Mr. Race, for matters between us shall stand exactly as if I'd been using your car for the next week, as arranged; but I've

made up my mind to turn round and go back to England to-day, after all."

Christopher was surprised, but he showed no astonishment. He merely regretted, civilly, that there was trouble in Mr. van Cortlandt's family and disappointment for Mr. van Cortlandt himself.

Nothing could have been pleasanter or more friendly than the manner of the two young men in discussing the situation; nevertheless, Christopher had a strong, if inexplicable, conviction that, in some way and for some reason thus far incomprehensible, he had been a tool in the hands of the other; that no sudden affliction had befallen the Amsterdam relatives of Mr. van Cortlandt; and that Mr. van Cortlandt had never really intended to take the trip he professed to abandon with so much reluctance.

If a car had been wanted only between London and Amsterdam and back again it appeared ridiculous that Scarlet Runner should have been shipped across the North Sea on a passenger boat, with a good deal of trouble and still more expense. It would have been so obviously easy and comparatively inexpensive to hire one car in England and another in Holland if a pleasant spin were the object. But the very fact that this expedient was obvious, yet had not been adopted, caused Christopher to look under the surface for motives. He began to suspect a game in which he was being made to play the part of dummy; and he awaited his next instructions with hidden eagerness, for under them might lie the key to the secret, if secret there were; and the chauffeur resolved to keep his eyes open for that key. If he had been employed simply to be used as a catspaw, he did not wish to let himself get badly burnt.

"We will go back now to your hotel, please, and pick up the suit-case which I asked you to leave there until my plans were settled," said Van Cortlandt. "There ought to be time for lunch, too; but as we have to arrange for the shipping of the car to-night I don't want any contretemps, and I think we'd better order plenty of food and drink to take on board the car, and eat by the way whenever we feel inclined."

Christopher turned the proposal over in his head, but could make nothing mysterious of it; nor had he got hold of any further clue by the time Scarlet Runner had landed them at the door of the old-fashioned Bible Hotel.

When they had arrived there, he expected his passenger to go in and see to the fetching of the suit-case, which, from the first, Christopher had ventured to think rather scanty provision for a week's tour. But Van Cortlandt had a different idea. He suggested that, as Race had arranged for the disposal of the luggage, he had better be the one to ask for it now; otherwise there might be a misunderstanding. Also he was to order something to eat and drink on the journey. Christopher agreed, wondering, half humorously, half anxiously, if the plot consisted in making off with Scarlet Runner during his absence.

Of course, he said to himself, nothing of the sort would happen; but, to make assurance doubly sure, he called the concierge to the door, and did not remove his eyes from the car for more than a minute at a time. Also, he had taken the precaution to stop the motor, which could not be started again by the most expert hand without noise enough to give warning even at a little distance.

During one of the moments when Christopher's attention was diverted from his best-loved possession, Mr. van Cortlandt left his seat and began examining the car with frank interest. His back was turned to the door of the hotel, where Christopher stood guard, but when the owner of the car came hurriedly out, accompanied by a porter with the suit-case and a waiter with a neat parcel, the passenger was peering into the petrol tank. "You're sure there isn't rather a queer smell?" he inquired. "I thought as we came there was bad carburation, or something."

Christopher, quick in defence of his darling, denied the bad carburation, and explained to the amateur that, even if it had existed, the petrol in the tank could have nothing to do with it. While the suit-case was being put away in the tonneau, however, Van Cortlandt asked various other questions about the car's mechanism, and Christopher wondered if his object were to make a delay in starting. Was he expecting someone to come, someone who had failed him, someone to whom it was important for him to speak before leaving Amsterdam?

But no acquaintance appeared, and when presently Christopher started the motor, Van Cortlandt made no objection to getting off.

They had an uneventful drive to the Hook. Christopher, who intended as a matter of course to guard the car on board the boat, expected that his passenger would take a cabin and rest during the passage, which promised to be disagreeable owing to the

steamy, unseasonable heat of the weather. But Van Cortlandt would not hear of leaving his chauffeur to get through the night alone. That would not be "sporting," said he; and the two spent the seven hours of the voyage together, never for a second out of sight of Scarlet Runner.

Christopher was as much puzzled as ever concerning his agreeable employer, for now there was nothing left of the trip save the run from Harwich to London, and it seemed impossible that a mystery should develop out of this affair after all.

It was the grey, misty dawn of a day which, though near the end of October, had the heat of mid-August in the air when the boat slowed into harbour. The passengers looked shadowy and anxious as ghosts who had just been ferried across the Styx. Christopher and his companion had not seen any of their fellow-sufferers during the night, as they had got on board earlier than the others, on account of the car. As they were somewhat out of the way of the passing crowd, and could not leave the ship until everyone else had gone, they would in all probability have got off as they had got on, without meeting a soul, had not a young woman, with a modest air of wishing to escape observation, flitted out of the way of the passengers pressing up from the cabins.

She wore a neat, dark grey tailor suit; her hat was draped with a blue tissue veil which fell over and covered her face; and she carried in her hand a leather-cased roll of music.

"By Jove!" muttered Van Cortlandt under his breath; and instantly it was clear to Christopher that he was not alone in recognising the pretty, girlish figure.

Race kept silence; but the other started forward and, without joining the girl, approached near enough to call her in a low voice without being heard by any of the more distant passengers. Watching intently, Christopher saw her start, peer anxiously through the blue cloud of her veil (which she did not lift), and then flit quickly up to Van Cortlandt. Evidently it was as great a surprise for her to see him as it was for him to find her on board. But they talked together in whispers, speaking with intense earnestness, the girl's back turned to the groups of passengers who stood or moved about on deck.

Among these, however, was an elderly, spectacled man, with old-fashioned side-whiskers, turning grey from sandy red, while shaggy brows and lank hair matched in colour the grizzled, reddish bunches on his thin cheeks. He wore a soft felt hat, which looked as if he had slept in it, and an overcoat so much too heavy for the unseasonable heat of the weather that he must have suffered from its weight. Separating himself from the line of passengers forming to leave the ship, he strolled towards the retired spot where Van Cortlandt and the girl in the blue veil were talking together. Then suddenly his eyes behind his spectacles lighted upon Van Cortlandt's face and lingered for an instant, his expression changing.

It was at this moment that Christopher became aware of the man's existence. He saw him glance at Van Cortlandt and turn away with some slight suggestion of haste; but evidently Van Cortlandt had recognised in him another acquaintance. The face of his employer was turned from Christopher, but the quick start forward he made told its own tale.

"Jacobs, is it possible?" Christopher heard Van Cortlandt ask.

The other man hesitated as if unwilling to answer, and Van Cortlandt spoke again sharply. "Surely you recognise me? Surely you know who I am?"

"I—suppose so," the stranger admitted at last.

"Then, in Heaven's name, tell me—in the name of all the demons—why you, too, are on board this boat, when you ought——"

But Race caught no more. The sandy-whiskered man moved closer to Van Cortlandt, and the two fell into earnest conversation, to which the girl listened without joining in. Nothing was clear to Christopher except that his employer had unexpectedly encountered a man and a woman on board the Harwich boat, one of whom, at all events, should have been somewhere else. "His journey to Amsterdam had something to do with the man, anyhow," Race said thoughtfully to himself. "As for the girl — I'm not so sure." But he remembered how she had come out of the house in front of which he had been directed to wait, and how, a very few moments after, Van Cortlandt had appeared, half an hour late for his appointment. "I shouldn't wonder if the girl had something to do with the famous tour, also," Christopher ended by thinking. And he was curious to see the face under the blue veil.

By this time the boat was in and the people beginning to go off. Presently no one was left save Scarlet Runner's owner, her

late passenger, and that passenger's two new-formed acquaintances. As the last group crowded the gangway Van Cortlandt came to Race, leaving the girl and the elderly man standing together.

"I suppose you won't mind carrying three of us instead of one?" he said. "A young lady I know has unexpectedly turned up, and a man with whom I've had some business dealings. I had no idea they were on board with us until I saw them this morning. In fact, it's only by a series of accidents that they are not somewhere else. But being

"VAN CORTLANDT SPOKE AGAIN SHARPLY: 'SURELY YOU RECOGNISE ME.'"

here, and both bound for London, if you don't object I would like to take them on the car. They have nothing with them except hand luggage."

Christopher answered that Scarlet Runner would not feel the difference between two passengers and four; and as soon as the car was on dry land and ready to start the newly-arranged party boarded her. Formerly Van Cortlandt had sat beside the driver, and such luggage as the two young men carried was in the tonneau. But now the old man was placed in front with Christopher, and Van Cortlandt was the girl's companion in the tonneau, the big kit-bag and suit-case being put on the roof.

Neither of the new occupants of the car was properly prepared for motoring. The man's hat was of an inconvenient shape for the wind of motion, and it and his heavy overcoat were black, though there had been no rain for days, and white, powdery dust lay inch-deep on the road. As for the girl, her hat was low and broad, and before starting she took off her veil and made a scarf of it, which she tied over her head and under her chin. Thus Christopher's wish was gratified, and he saw that she was very pretty, even prettier than he had dared to picture her, after that tantalizing glimpse of big, dark eyes.

She was distinctly of the gipsy type, with a dusky colour coming and going under the brown of her peach-smooth cheeks. Deep dimples sprang into life as she laughed; her great black eyes were exceedingly brilliant and full of expression, while every little gesture had an individual grace and eloquence which spoke of a singularly vivid personality. There was no doubt that she was a lady; and the first words that

Christopher heard her speak told him that she was an American. In spite of the tiresome journey and the unnatural heat of the day, the girl was sparkling with the joy of youth and life, and was childishly delighted with the prospect of several hours' spin in a fine automobile. Possibly, too, Van Cortlandt's presence had something to do with her pleasure; in any case it was plain that she was an object of deep interest to the young man, who could scarcely take his eyes from her face. They talked and laughed together after starting, and, though Christopher caught only a few scattered words, he gained an impression that some undertaking in which each had been engaged bade fair to be successful.

The man on the front seat was apparently far from being as well satisfied with his situation as the others. He pulled his hat as far down as possible to keep the dust out of his eyes, turned up the collar of his overcoat, then nervously unbuttoned the great-coat and threw it back, sighing with relief.

At this early hour of the morning the country lay still and calm, and few were stirring save labourers plodding heavily to work. The villages through which the car sped had drawn blinds sheltering tired workers, and not many houses were open save here and there an inn. Christopher looked forward to an easy run, the one thing that he disliked being the long chain of interminable suburbs, with skiddy tram-lines, which he must meet before he reached the heart of London. On starting two days before he had picked up his passenger at a busy hotel in Bloomsbury, and, as he had so far received no further instructions, he supposed that Mr. van Cortlandt wished to be deposited there.

"What kind of a person was it who followed you, Jacobs?" the young man in the tonneau leaned forward to ask, after a long conversation with the girl who sat beside him.

Jacobs swallowed heavily, and Christopher saw his hand tighten on the back of the seat as he turned to answer: "Don't you think, sir, that I—that we—that it might be wiser not to——"

Van Cortlandt laughed. "Oh, I see, you think I'm incautious in talking business before outsiders? That's like your prudence, which my uncle described to me when he showed me your photograph the other day, and told me what sort of man I must expect to find. But, as a matter of fact, we can speak as among friends here—now that our errand has been done and we're close to home again. This young lady, Miss Warren, has been on the same mission that you and I have been on."

The man on the front seat gave a jump. "She, sir! And you, too, *the same errand as mine!*"

"Yes," said Van Cortlandt. "You probably guessed when you were introduced to me, over there, that you weren't the only one sent?"

"I—no reason was given me to think that there were others," stammered Jacobs. "I supposed that mine was—was the only message."

"'Message' is rather a good word for a cautious man like you," laughed Van Cortlandt. "You're quite right, there's only one real 'message,' as you call it: but there are three of sorts, and each of us is carrying one. Even I don't know which is which. It is a strange thing that all three should have been brought together in this car, when only one should have come this way, another by Flushing, another by Rotterdam, as an additional precaution in case of 'followers.'"

"It is strange indeed," said Jacobs, glancing stealthily at Christopher.

"Oh, Mr. Race isn't in this, except that he's taking us all to London as fast as he can get us there—three passengers instead of the one he'd engaged to transport. But he's absolutely to be trusted. You must have heard of Mr. Christopher Race, who helped put the young King of Dalvania on his throne? Well, this is the very man who's driving us now. An honour, isn't it? I haven't discussed my business with him, because there was no reason I should, and I don't flatter myself he has much curiosity about his passengers' affairs; he has too many interesting ones on hand of his own. Besides, I didn't want to worry him with too deep a sense of responsibility. But we can speak before him now. As for Miss Warren, she's rather a celebrity, too. If you were an American instead of—what *do* you call yourself, Jacobs?—you would probably know something about Miss Constance Warren, who writes for the papers. When this day's work is over, she will be privileged to make of it what she would call a 'story.' I got my uncle to employ her, so that she might get a little kudos out of the thing after it was well over, and the secret could be allowed to come out. But you haven't told me yet what sort of person followed you, and caused you to think it

would be wiser to come this way instead of going by Flushing as arranged."

"It was a fat, Jewish-looking man, sir," replied Jacobs, becoming glib at last. "I could hardly describe him beyond that he had a hooked nose, a large black beard, and was well dressed. He kept pressing against me in the railway station, and looked at me with such particular interest that, when I got a chance to escape in a sudden press of the crowd—a lot of emigrants pouring into the station — I got away, and hastily decided to come by the Hook. I hope you think I did right?'

"Oh, quite, if you felt sure that your imagination wasn't playing games with you. Miss Warren's experience was even more trying than yours. Because of a person who apparently chased her in a cab from the first, and who climbed into her railway carriage at the last minute, she jumped out after the train began to move, risking trouble with Dutch officials, to say nothing of broken bones. She is a brave girl. But I knew that beforehand." And Ean van Cortlandt gave Miss Warren a look which, if he had wished to hide his feelings for her, would have been, to say the least, imprudent.

"HE KEPT PRESSING AGAINST ME IN THE RAILWAY STATION."

"I was quite sure imagination had nothing to do with it," Jacobs insisted, anxious to exonerate himself. "Of course, the man may have been only an ordinary pickpocket. But do I look like a man whose pocket would be worth picking? This is the watch I carry about with me." And, somewhat ostentatiously, he pulled out a plain old gun-metal watch.

Christopher heard this talk with interest, and confessed to himself that, though it wasn't "his affair," he would like to know the nature of the message to which the man beside him had so cautiously referred. In his silent interest he observed all that went on, and it struck him that Jacobs looked at the gun-metal watch with concealed eagerness. He had produced it apparently in the sole desire to prove his poverty, his unattractiveness to thieves, yet his eyes fixed themselves sharply on the staring white face; and he did not put the watch away again until he had had time to know the hour and minute.

Christopher looked too, and saw that the hands pointed to the quarter before eight. They had been some time in getting Scarlet Runner off the boat and away from the wharf, otherwise they ought to have been much earlier, for Van Cortlandt had brought his chauffeur a roll and cup of coffee on board, had broken his own fast also, and the other two had presumably done the same when the chance offered; therefore they had had no need to stop.

Before them now rose the spires and clustered the roofs of a village, and as they entered it Jacobs, who had been silent after putting away his watch, turned again to speak to Van Cortlandt.

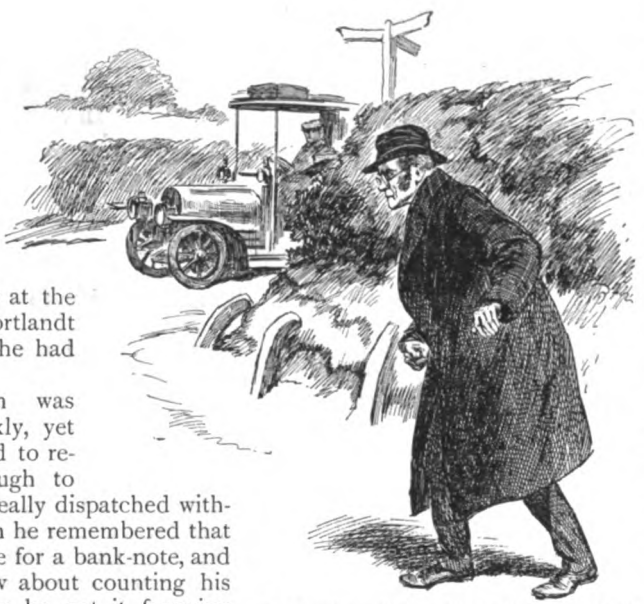
"It would be a great favour," he said, "if you would be willing to make a short stop here, sir, only long enough for me to send a telegram. I don't know if your uncle mentioned to you that my wife is ill and worrying about this trip of mine?"

"I didn't even know that you had a wife," replied Van Cortlandt.

"I have, sir, and a good one. She will be

expecting me earlier than I can arrive, and I should like to let her have a few words to reassure her; nothing, of course, except about myself, my health, and when I shall be with her again. I'd wire in cipher, too, in case of any busybodies. She and I have one which we worked out together when we were young, and always use when I'm away, as often happens."

Van Cortlandt consented to the slight delay, and Christopher stopped the car in front of the village post-office. Jacobs scrambled lightly down, like a younger man than he appeared to be; and Christopher happened to notice that his hands looked strong and muscular. As he hurried into the post-office Van Cortlandt strolled after him, buying a few stamps and standing near enough to take a glance at the address on the telegram. This was not because he distrusted Jacobs, but because he had much at stake in this venture, and could not afford to take chances. The cipher message was unreadable, but the name of Jacobs stood out plainly at the top, and Van Cortlandt was satisfied, as he had expected to be.



"RETURNING, HE REJOINED THE ROAD AHEAD OF SCARLET RUNNER."

The telegram was handed in quickly, yet its sender begged to remain long enough to see that it was really dispatched without delay. Then he remembered that he wanted change for a bank-note, and was carefully slow about counting his money over when he got it, fancying a mistake, and apologizing at length when he discovered that there had been none after all. If there could have been any reason why Jacobs should wish to linger deliberately, after getting off the message to his sick wife, Van Cortlandt might have been vexed and suspicious; but he remembered that this elderly, red-whiskered man was famous among those who knew him, or knew of him, for his trustworthiness.

At last they were off again, but they had not gone far when Jacobs cried out that his handkerchief had just blown away. It was one he valued; his wife had embroidered his initials on it. Really, he thought he saw it caught in a bush a little way behind. By Van Cortlandt's consent, Christopher reversed the car and went back for half a mile; but the handkerchief was not found, though Jacobs got out and thoroughly ransacked a group of bushes to look for it, being gone some time. Returning, he rejoined the road ahead of Scarlet Runner, which stood throbbing impatient to be off, and Christopher thought, as he advanced towards the car, shaking his head and bemoaning his loss, that he scattered something by the way. Starting on again, with the nervous old man hardly settled in his place, there came a sharp explosion, and Scarlet Runner had burst a tyre.

The sudden sound gave Jacobs a shock, which caused him to grip the seat nervously and cry out. He had never been in a motor before, he explained, and thought that someone must have shot at the car.

"What was it you threw on the road before you got in just now?" asked Christopher, already out, and preparing to jack up.

"Nothing," answered the man, innocently.

"I saw you put your hand in your overcoat pocket and then scatter something," said Race.

"Ah, I was merely feeling to see if I had an extra handkerchief in my pocket," explained Jacobs, "and dipping my fingers into a mess of biscuit crumbs, I got rid of them, if that's what you mean. Here are more, left behind." And, as if to prove his words, he displayed in the palm of his hand a few broken bits of biscuit.

To doubt his explanation seemed ridiculous, even monstrous; yet Christopher had just discovered a bit of broken bottle-glass deeply embedded in the deflated tyre. No doubt it

was a coincidence. Van Cortlandt evidently believed fully in Jacobs, and yet—some curious conjectures passed through the mind of Race as he did his work of repairing, with his three passengers sitting, or walking up and down, by the roadside. What he thought he kept to himself, as it would have been the height of impropriety to accuse, on the vaguest suspicion, the trusted employé of his own employer. Nevertheless, when the tyre was changed and Scarlet Runner on the way once more, he threw an occasional keen glance at the whiskered face under the shadow of the dusty hat-brim. The day grew more and more sultry, and the air was so heavy that even in driving there was no freshness. The thick dust also was very disagreeable, especially for the two new members of the party, who were unprepared for motoring; and Christopher was not surprised when, after about two-thirds of the run to London, Jacobs complained of headache and vertigo. It was, he supposed, in an apologetic murmur, his inexperience in motoring, as well as having been somewhat upset at sea, which caused him to suffer now; but Christopher suggested that it was far more likely to be the weight of his big overcoat, and advised him to take it off.

This, oddly enough, Jacobs seemed unwilling to do. He had chosen the coat to travel in, he said, as the weather was very different when he started. Now, if he parted with it, the change would be too sudden; and he appealed to Van Cortlandt in rather a marked way for confirmation of this opinion.

But the young man only laughed good-naturedly, wondering that Jacobs had been able to cling to the heavy garment so long. "Take the thing off and sit on it," said he, "if you've got any love-letters in the pockets which you're afraid of losing."

"Whatever I may have in a pocket of that coat is safe in any position, I assure you, sir," protested the other, consenting at last to follow the advice of the majority. And indeed, looked at closely, the garment did appear to be of rather unusual make. There were no pockets on the outside, but there might well be several capacious hidden ones. And though Jacobs seemed so certain that the contents of such pockets must be safe, when he had taken off the overcoat he not only sat upon but leaned both shoulders against it, as it draped the back of the seat.

Still, he felt no better, and on coming in sight of an old-fashioned roadside inn not far outside the dark fringe of London suburbs, he begged that the car might pause at the door long enough for him to get a glass of brandy.

"Hadn't you better wait a bit till we get farther on?" asked Van Cortlandt, not unsympathetically. "The stuff's sure to be bad here."

"Oh, sir, if you knew how faint and queer I feel——" faltered Jacobs; and Christopher hastily slowed down in front of the inn, where a small, uncovered automobile was already standing, covered with fresh dust.

The whiskered face was grey with dust, therefore it was impossible to see the natural state of the sufferer's complexion; but he sat with eyes half closed and head bowed forward, as if on the verge of unconsciousness, and Van Cortlandt jumped quickly out to order the brandy. Miss Warren sprang down from the car also, coming round to the front for an anxious look at the sick man's face, and to ask if she could do anything. She had her leather-cased music-roll in her hand, and Christopher saw the dulled eyes of Jacobs glance at it, from under drooping lids.

Then, just as Van Cortlandt would have entered the inn, out burst three policemen. "We arrest you all on a warrant, charged with theft," called out one, "and it will be better for you not to resist."

But Van Cortlandt did resist, and violently. Not for himself alone, but for the girl. He hurled off the man who grasped him by the shoulder, and, springing to the aid of Miss Warren, dashed aside the big fellow in blue who would have seized her by the arm.

Instantly Jacobs had waked from his dazed state into vivid alertness. The third policeman, who attempted to catch Van Cortlandt round the waist, was sent reeling by a back-handed blow from a strong fist in deadly earnest; and, seeing this violence, seeing also the little crowd which quickly gathered at Van Cortlandt's cry of "Help!" Jacobs slipped out of the car, lithe as a snake.

"Don't resist—safer not to resist, sir!" he cried; and, while apparently wishing to aid his patron, so stumbled against him as to fling him into the arms of the tallest policeman.

Seeing himself trapped, Van Cortlandt cried to Race, "99, Park Lane!" and at the same instant something was tossed into the tonneau. Quick as light, Christopher took his cue and dashed off at speed, Jacobs and one of the policemen tearing after him.

"Stop thief! Stop thief!" warning voices yelled; but he would have been a bold man, or a foolhardy one, who tried to check Scarlet Runner's rush with anything save a bomb. Luckily, there was no bomb handy,

and knowing nothing of the fate of his late passengers, knowing only that the man he served had bidden him go, Christopher made Scarlet Runner fly along the London road like a red cannon-ball.

"Ninety-nine, Park Lane! Ninety-nine, Park Lane!"

He seemed to hear Van Cortlandt's voice still calling the direction in his ears.

At first the number had no special meaning for him, but as his first hot excitement cooled he realized that 99, Park Lane, had some association of importance in his mind.

"'DON'T RESIST—SAFER NOT TO RESIST, SIR!' HE CRIED."

"By Jove, it's Maritz's house!" he exclaimed. And the mystery of his tour and the experiences attending it appeared suddenly to flash with rainbow colours, clear and bright. For Maritz was (and is) a South African millionaire, president of the Blue Sinbad Diamond Mines, Limited. A rumour had been flitting about that he had bought from the company that great diamond lately found in their own fields, named the New Koh-i-Noor, and that, with the view of currying favour in high circles and perhaps securing a title, he intended to present it to the Crown.

What if Van Cortlandt had journeyed to Amsterdam on business concerning the New Koh-i-Noor? The cutting of the diamond must have been done there, and if the young man were a nephew of Peter Maritz (Jacobs had talked about "your uncle"), what more natural that he should be trusted to bring it back safe, despite all attempts likely to be made upon it *en route* if the secret of the errand had leaked out?

In such a case no wonder there had been precautions, and a trumped-up story of a tour and a relative in Amsterdam. No wonder a rendezvous had been given in a queer street; no wonder, if the great stone were to be fetched from a house in that street, a marked man, like the nephew of Peter Maritz, had appointed a meeting at another. Still, there was the girl to be accounted for. *She* had come from the house named; but she must be unknown in the business to those who watched such affairs for their own profit, and most likely there was a connection inside between the two buildings.

With these thoughts running through his head, Christopher slowed down just enough to make it safe to turn his head and give a quick glance behind, to see what thing had been thrown into the tonneau at the moment of his flight.

It was Miss Warren's music-roll, and she must have contrived to toss it there on learn-

ing from Van Cortlandt's order that the car was to make a break for freedom. In his haste to aid his employer, or to mingle in the tussle in some way, Jacobs had jumped out, leaving his precious overcoat; therefore it was not strange that he had run screaming after Scarlet Runner.

"From the first I thought he was disguised and anxious to screen his face from the light," Christopher thought. "That cipher telegram he sent! He'd just learned from Van Cortlandt that there were *three* messengers instead of one, and all, by a queer chance, in this car. Could he have wired to bring those fellows out? What if they're not policemen?"

As the last word formed itself in his mind it was as though it had been a magic summons to call up other men in blue coats; for before Scarlet Runner had got her speed again three uniformed figures leaped from behind a clump of trees to line up across the road.

Christopher's first thought was to blame himself for slowing down to glance behind, and to atone by making a dash, scattering the men, who might be conspirators in the same plot. But, even at a distance, his clear-sighted eyes recognised a face he had seen before. One of these policemen was a well-known "motor trapper," with whom Christopher had come into friendly contact more than once. Whatever the men at the inn a mile back might be, these were genuine servants of the law; and a brilliant idea danced into Race's mind. With the view of making it useful, he slowed down instantly.

"You've done the measured distance at a speed of fifty and a half miles an hour," said the inspector of police whom Christopher remembered, his stop-watch in his hand. "Where's your licence?"

"Here it is, and here's my card," answered Race. "Don't you know me, inspector—in spite of the dust? And don't you know Scarlet Runner?"

"Why, yes, Mr. Race, I recognise you now," said the policeman. "I'm sorry to say, however, as you were going at such a speed——"

"First offence, isn't it?" laughed Christopher. "And when you've heard a word or two, I think even *you* will say I was justified in exceeding the legal limit. Summon me if you think right; but go back now to the next public-house and rescue my passengers, one of whom is, I believe, a nephew of the millionaire, Peter Maritz. He and the lady with him are the victims of a plot, and have just been arrested by three thieves disguised as policemen. They appealed to the landlord and several other men, but the power of the law is so much respected that naturally the pretended policemen were believed against them. I was sent off to Mr. Maritz, whom I want to see as quickly as I can, and if you and your comrades can get to the scene before the thieves have hustled their victims away——"

The inspector waited to hear no more. All his professional pride was on fire. "Go on, Mr. Race," he broke in; "we'll overlook your furious driving this time. And have no fear for your friends. It's a strange story you tell, but I know you, and I believe it. We've got bicycles, and as the house is only a mile away we'll be there before you can say 'Jack Robinson.'"

"Take care you don't go beyond the legal limit," laughed Christopher, excitedly, and sped off at a speed to risk being "held up" by another police trap.

"First time in my life I was glad to get caught in one of those," he said to himself, "and I'd be willing to bet it will be the last."

At least, it was the last for that day; for he was not again stopped on his way into town, though had he been, he must have confessed that he deserved it. Never had he driven so fast through traffic, except on the day when he followed the automobile with the Nuremberg watch; and at the last moment, as he drove through bronze gates into the millionaire's famous courtyard, he just escaped being crashed into by a passing motor omnibus.

Never had Christopher been inside these magnificent gates before, but so often had he seen the courtyard pictured in illustrated papers, when the house was new and the wonder of London, that marble walls and pillars, Venetian windows and great bronze statues, appeared familiar to him.

The gates had been opened, perhaps, for an electric brougham which stood before the door to pass out, and the servants in livery glared daggers at the reckless chauffeur who dashed in, risking a collision. But Christopher stopped Scarlet Runner at a safe distance, and called out that he wished to see Mr. Maritz on urgent business.

At the sound of that name a gentleman looked from the window of the brougham, and his face had been made familiar by the same methods which immortalized his mansion.

"I come from Mr. van Cortlandt," added

Christopher, this time addressing himself directly to the millionaire. He expected to see a look of enlightenment dawn on the clever, somewhat hard, features. But, to his surprise, for an instant Peter Maritz appeared puzzled. "Mr. van Cortlandt?" he repeated, questioningly. Then, with a slight exclamation and a change of expression, he opened the door of the brougham before his alert servants had time to touch it.

"You have a message for me from Mr. van Cortlandt?" he asked.

"Not exactly a message," answered Christopher. "But I have news of importance."

"Come indoors with me and tell it, then," said Peter Maritz, who had the manners of a gentleman as well as the wealth of a millionaire.

Christopher looked doubtful. "I'm not sure about leaving the car," he replied, in a lower voice. "I may be carrying something of—er—considerable value."

Maritz asked no further questions and made no new suggestions, but mounted to the seat beside Christopher which Jacobs had last occupied, giving at the same time a glance at his servants which sent them to a distance.

Race did not begin his story at the beginning, but very near the end, slurring over what had happened until he reached the episode at the inn. When Maritz heard that Van Cortlandt and Miss Warren had been seized by men in the dress of policemen, his dark face suddenly paled.

"But my nephew told you to drive on, to come here?" he demanded, tersely.

"Yes. And I came as fast as I could, after sending back three genuine policemen to the rescue."

"Then where is that which my nephew trusted you to bring to me?"

"He trusted me with nothing—except the sense to understand his meaning. But Miss Warren tossed her music-roll into the car as I shot away from the inn."

"That was clever of her, and shows that she is the right kind of girl. But, though she thought she was carrying something of importance, as a matter of fact she wasn't. She was a kind of decoy duck."

"The man Jacobs, who I venture to believe is a fraud, disguised to look like someone else, left his overcoat behind, very much against his will."

"No doubt it was against his will, if he had put a little parcel he ought to have had into one of its pockets. But there's nothing in that overcoat which can interest me. And for the moment I'm not interested in this spurious Jacobs, who was probably furious at being seen by Ean on the boat. What I want is the thing which my nephew, whom you know as Mr. van Cortlandt, *must* have given you to bring me, or he would certainly not have sent you away from him with your car."

"I tell you he gave me nothing," persisted Christopher, beginning to resent the piercing glance of the millionaire. "If there is anything of his on board it must be in his luggage."

"Very well; we'll have the luggage down," said Maritz, "and I will look through it here and now, sitting by your side. Johnson!"—and he raised his tone imperatively—"shut the gates."

The bronze gates closed, and the courtyard became as private as if it had been a vast room.

The next order was for Van Cortlandt's suit-case to come down from the roof of the car, where it had been placed when the new members joined the party. A strange-looking, thin little key on the millionaire's watch-chain opened the case as though it had been made for the lock; and the absent man's clothing, neatly folded as if by a valet, lay exposed to view. Peter Maritz lifted everything out, shook each garment, and ransacked each corner of the handsomely-fitted piece of luggage, but the thing he searched for was not there. He was looking very stern and anxious now.

"I am as sure as I am of my own life that my nephew would not have voluntarily remained in the hands of thieves, sending you and your motor on, if he had had on his person the thing I trusted him to bring back to me," said Maritz, with grim confidence. "He himself did not know whether he, Miss Warren, or my old servant Jacobs was carrying back the real thing or an imitation; nevertheless, as he knew the chances were one in three that he had the right one, he would have died rather than risk breaking faith with me."

"I can give you no explanation of the mystery," said Christopher. "Mr. Van Cortlandt—who, I suppose, did not even trust me with his real name—confided not at all in me, therefore I had no responsibility except to obey instructions. If I happen to guess that you employed three messengers, each one of whom was to bring back (as he thought) a diamond cut in Amsterdam, and all of whom met by accident in the same boat, I have absolutely nothing to go upon except my own suspicions."

"NOW THAT YOU ARE HERE, IN MY COURTYARD, THERE IS NO REASON WHY I SHOULDN'T CONFIRM YOUR 'SUSPICIONS.'"

"Now that you are here, in my courtyard, there is no reason why I shouldn't confirm your 'suspicions,'" replied Maritz, in a more conciliatory tone. "You ought to have with you the New Koh-i-Noor, of which you must have heard. You see I have cause for anxiety, and have had cause enough ever since the truth about my purchase of the finest diamond found in a hundred years unfortunately leaked out. I was certain that a well-known gang of diamond thieves would be on the look-out for the stone on its way back from Amsterdam, and I did my best to guard it. It was my nephew's idea to employ you and your car; and knowing your name and the reputation you made in Dalvania I approved the notion. As for giving you a false name, he did nothing of the sort. His middle name is Van Cortlandt—his last is the same as mine; though he has lived much abroad, and, luckily for my project, is scarcely known here as yet. You can see why he did not wish to give his own name, Maritz, on account of the association. It was better for you to know nothing, and you need have no resentment if he was not entirely frank. The mission was not his own, but mine, though if he succeeded he was to be made my private secretary, with such a salary as to keep himself and a wife, if he chose to take one—Miss Warren, for instance—in luxury. Now you understand what hung upon success, for him, and you must see that he would not easily fail me. If you are hiding anything, because you think you haven't been treated fairly——"

Christopher broke in with a protest; but the position was now becoming worse than uncomfortable. He was at his wits' end, and in his desperation would have told the millionaire to send for the police and have him searched, if he chose, when a loud clang at the gate-bell cut him short.

"Keep everybody out!" cried Maritz.

"What if it is your nephew himself?" exclaimed Christopher.

"Then let him in," amended the master of the house; and an instant later the small gate at the side of the great ones was opened to admit Van Cortlandt-Maritz, with Miss Warren.

"Hurrah, uncle!" cried the young man. "We hired a motor and came on like lightning after the rescue. Poor old Jacobs was drugged on his way to get the diamond, it seems; and who but the notorious Tom Astley did the trick and disguised himself so well I think even you wouldn't have detected the fraud—so well, he was exactly like Jacobs's photograph which you showed me—and got the parcel. But he's caught, and his three confederates; and the diamond's in his overcoat. This girl is the trump I told you she would be, and her packet she threw into the car, as Mr. Race must have told you."

"But yours—yours, Ean; that's what I want," almost panted the millionaire.

"I stuffed it into the petrol tank—just room to squeeze it in," said the young man, calmly. Then, turning to the girl, he caught her hand. "*Won't* you have a 'story' to write?" he cried. "And it will have to end with our wedding."

"Forgive me for everything, Mr. Race," said Peter Maritz. "You must come to that wedding."

ON FORM IN CRICKET AND ITS MYSTERY

BY A. E. KNIGHT

DESPITE the accepted uncertainty of cricket, there is no subject which causes so great an amount of discussion, of criticism, and it may be added of invention, as the extraordinary fluctuations of form to which all players, and to a lesser degree all teams, are at one time or another subject. It is doubtful whether any explanation ever covers the varied contingencies which bring victory or defeat. Even the actual player cannot hope to judge precisely the way in which the ups and downs of the game are affected by wicket or weather conditions or by the varying temperaments and personalities engaged in the play.

A. E. KNIGHT.
From a Photo. by E. Hawkins & Co.

Usually we explain a series of collapses or defeats on grounds of staleness, of nervousness, or, when these analyses are not so easily recognised as the facts, we fall back upon that blessed word "luck," beneath whose vagueness all our misfortunes may find shelter. A run of bad luck is, however, quite compatible with the very best of form. Men whose batting at the nets proves their form may be out directly they go in on the match wicket.

I have often noticed how splendidly men play for the first time after a long rest. Players who will tell you that they have not handled a bat during the season will come in and play a great innings, and yet, curiously enough, they will feel the want of the practice they have missed and demonstrate it obviously enough in their next two or three innings. It has often been observed how great batsmen like A. C. MacLaren and F. S. Jackson come into first-class cricket to pile up runs in a long sequence, notwithstanding their inability to play regularly. Such players demonstrate how great a part confidence plays in form.

THE VALUE OF CONFIDENCE.

Both players possess that sanguine temperament which remains unaffected by any skill which the bowler may put up against them. So long as they remain at the wicket one feels that they dominate the situation — that they, and not the bowlers, are the real aggressors. Confidence would indeed seem to be one of the first essentials of success, of "being in form."

The bowler who feels like getting men out is a very different bowler from one possessed of equal skill who yet thinks that chance or luck has to get him his victims. And although it often happens that a batsman who feels that he has never a run left in him may score largely, and he before whom the ball looms large as a football fails to score, successful form must mean confidence. This confidence must be in no way confounded with the over-confidence of ignorance. To know that we can use all the skill and power we have is a very different thing from the belief that we have a skill with which the gods never endowed us. Confidence, however, based upon the intelligence which is fully alive to the countless happenings of play is a kind of sheer will force, which enables men to score heavily.

NERVES.

Nervousness, to which all are prone, is by no means a universal curse. Some, it is true, are emptied of all power by it, others but touched to anxiety, while a rare few are stimulated and braced by it to a most unusual exaltation. Repeated failure will make the best of men limp and flabby, depress

them until despair envelops them. Fuller Pilch was as quiet and even-minded a man as he was great with the bat. Once, however, he failed to score in five successive innings, and an old player records how he saw him lying upon the ground "quite out of heart and saying, in his despair, 'I feel I shall never get another run as long as I live.'"

Great occasions—a Gentlemen *v.* Players or a Test Match—may so affect the player's mind as to render him utterly out of sorts and unable to play the game natural to him. Yet, on the other hand, there are men positively inspired by great opportunity who realize on a special occasion a standard of play which surprises those who know them in the daily round of ordinary games. So far from being enwrapped by the shadow of the great event are they as to determine to do better than ever. And they do it. The state of mind is, I believe, a far more important factor than the state of digestion of the man in or out of form.

"HE SAW HIM LYING UPON THE GROUND QUITE OUT OF HEART."

Very rarely is the collapse of a whole side due to nervousness. Such collapses are nearly always occurrences on wickets affected by rain or wear and tear. Were bowling habitually high-class, so pronounced would its superiority on such wickets be shown that collapses would be quite normal. There are very few bowlers now who can get all the help that is possible out of an affected wicket, as could Haigh and Walter Mead at their best, and even moderate scoring on bad wickets will be found invariably due to the indifferent length which many otherwise clever bowlers maintain upon them.

TIME'S CHANGES.

Always most difficult to tell is the declining form which is due to the advance of the years. The fieldsman finds his knees getting a little stiffer as the thirties draw nigh to forty. He cannot start quite so nippily, and he persuades himself that the catch we thought possible was just out of his reach. The batsman finds his possibilities restricted somewhat similarly. His mobility is lessened and his wrists lose a degree or two of elasticity, so that the cut that once skimmed by third man to the boundary now touches the edge of the bat and rests in short slip's hands or the wicket-keeper's gloves. You know perfectly well the cause of it all, and practise the more diligently to avert its effects. In vain, however, for the timing of the ball is an automatic procedure—an exquisite fusion of eye and hand, an imperceptible blending. And when, howsoever slightly, the shrinking muscle fails to follow the quick, clear eye, you realize that a certain stroke has lost for you at least the glory of attainment.

So, too, the bowler, whose wrist and fingers once gave so much spin to the ball that it came from the pitch as though a fiend were within it—full of a "devil" that the batsman could not time. With the same delivery, with possibly as much break, and with an increased amount of head work and an enlarged knowledge of a batsman's weak points, he bowls apparently the identical ball. Yet it is as lead dropping on the pitch lifeless, devoid of sting! The essential quality of a man's bowling—its genius, so to speak—passes thus quickly away; yet, as with the batsman, certain permanent qualities of style remain. Pace is exhausted, but good length remains, and the good batsman feels that this thoughtful bowler may still get him out.

"IT RESTS IN THE WICKET-KEEPER'S GLOVES."

Style That Tells.

In batsmanship style and method have much to do with permanence. No batsman will score consistently unless his method is reasonably sound; yet of the methods of some of the most brilliant and beautiful of players one may say that they are for youth alone—for a time when wrist and eye and feet are wonderfully blended. Marvellous wrist and marvellous eye alone justify the cut of Trumper, the most glorious of all batsmen; a concentrated watchfulness and a rapidity of swing well-nigh unique alone can execute the pull of Jessop. The brilliance of such widely differing men as these is apt to blind us to the abiding virtues of orthodoxy.

Long-maintained "form" is, indeed, dependent upon soundness. The enduring sway of Dr. Grace, or, to come a little nearer, of C. B. Fry and of Hayward, owes much to their correct method. Men like Trumper and Jessop—far removed in skill and method—are yet one in that they see nothing but the ball and go for it. Enterprising and speculative are they, yet so successful as to convey the idea that their progress is the development of order. All good batsmen have good seasons and make high scores, but the wonderful consistency, the uninterrupted levels of scoring, which have marked the form of Fry and Hayward at their best, fully prove how great a glory is soundness. "Form" of this kind suffers least of all from the advance of time. It carries men through periods of temporary ineffectiveness with the sure hope of emergence. Such "form" is never wholly lost. In the aged batsman it shines, a light which, though faded, is still light, a grace which no stiffness can quite exorcise.

"CAUGHT AT POINT FROM THE FOURTH BALL SENT DOWN."

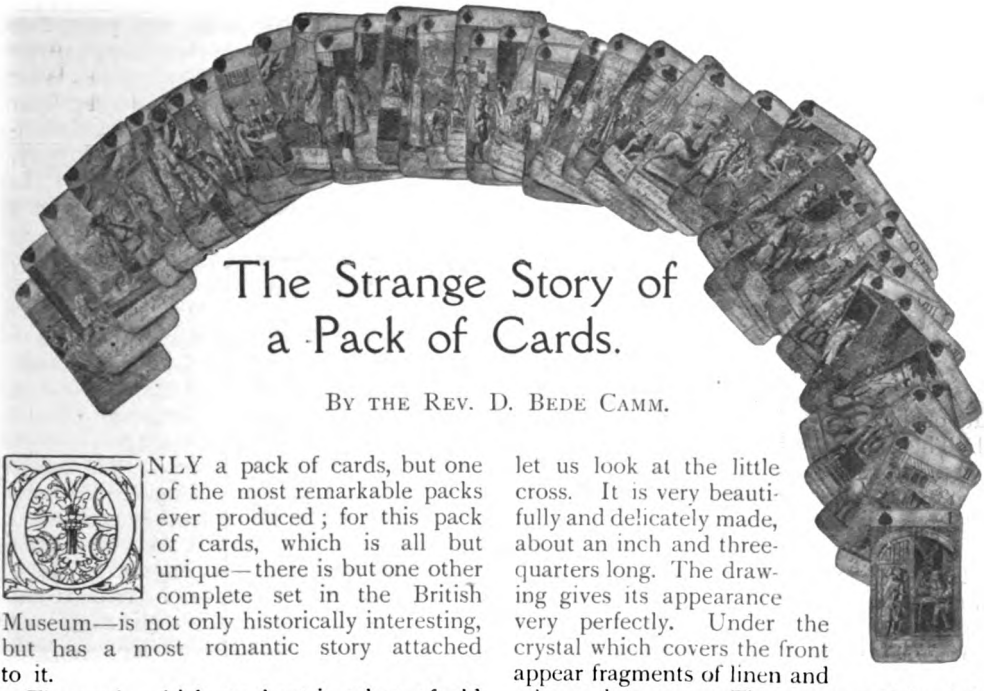
Nothing, indeed, is more striking to a critical observer than the individuality of a beautiful style, persisting even when the scoring powers which once belonged to it are on the wane. To get the best results even from the most correct of accredited methods, such methods must be perfectly natural to a man. He must play with a freedom which is utterly unconscious of any laws which constrain him, and yet still be obedient to them.

I remember how beautifully A. P. Lucas always played right up to his last appearance in county cricket. One felt as one watched how delightful it must have been to see him in earlier days. On the other hand—and I think it is mostly true of players who have been pre-eminently hitters—you may see batsmen who have totalled their hundreds play such bad cricket that you wonder how they could have so scored. With their run-getting powers, the form, the shaping towards run-getting, seems to have disappeared also.

Style, in the narrow sense of beauty, may co-exist with many imperfections which mar one's scoring, and many a great run-getter may be far from pretty to watch. Quite apart from score-sheet values, however, a beautiful style has the effect of making batting look so delightful and easy an art that its tendency is to dishearten a bowler. Style is a flowing robe which graces the stylish, but simply impedes the borrower of it.

To revert at last to that "luck" with which I have suggested we too often condone our shortcomings. Mr. Murdoch once struck a very bad patch when over here with an Australian team. I believe he played some six innings for ten or eleven runs. One of these innings in which he failed to score was against Yorkshire. From the first ball of the match he was missed at short slip, from the second at point, and again from the third at the wicket, being finally caught at point from the fourth ball sent down.

Now it is always "bad luck" to get out for a duck, so many possibilities of snicking an odd run being open to the most unskilful of players; yet how should we apportion the element of fortune in such a medley of good and bad luck as this opening over of Peate's brought with it? Amid all the changes and chances of our "form," luck is probably the least and last cause we can truly grasp. Skill and the even temperament which can best exploit it are the essential and the abiding factors in our "form."

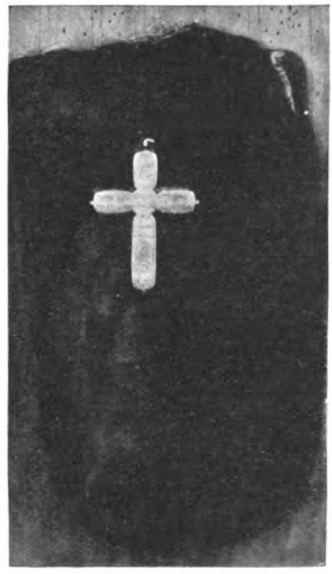


The Strange Story of a Pack of Cards.

By the Rev. D. Bede Camm.

ONLY a pack of cards, but one of the most remarkable packs ever produced; for this pack of cards, which is all but unique—there is but one other complete set in the British Museum—is not only historically interesting, but has a most romantic story attached to it.

The cards, which are kept in a bag of old red brocade at least as old as they are, belong to a gentleman of an old Catholic family, Mr. James Barton, living at Weld Bank, near Chorley, in Lancashire. In the penal days, probably in the early years of William and Mary, a priest was staying in the house of an ancestor of the owner of the cards near Burscough, when the family was thrown into confusion by the sudden appearance of a pursuivant, or priest-catcher. The priest had to fly for his life, and he managed to escape by water, but he had not time to save even his most cherished possessions. Among the things he left behind him was this pack of cards, some books, and a beautiful little reliquary in the shape of a cross of gold and crystal. These have been cherished in the family ever since. Although the priest escaped, his hosts had to suffer; their property was confiscated, and the head of the family was carried off to Lancaster, where he died in confinement.

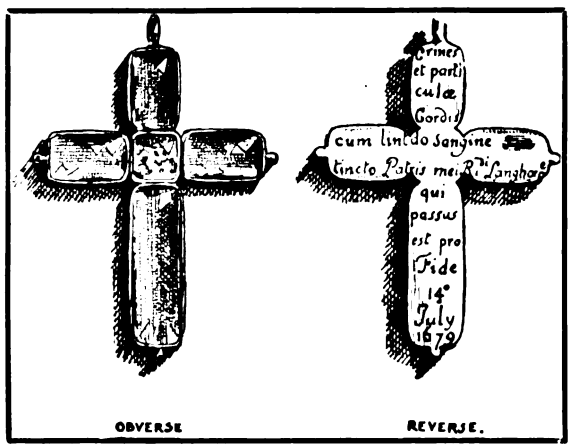


THE BAG OF RED BROCADE CONTAINING THE OLD PACK OF CARDS. THE GOLD AND CRYSTAL CROSS CONTAINS THE RELICS OF RICHARD LANGHORNE, WHO PERISHED IN THE PLOT WHICH IS ILLUSTRATED ON THE CARDS.

Before examining the cards, let us look at the little cross. It is very beautifully and delicately made, about an inch and three-quarters long. The drawing gives its appearance very perfectly. Under the crystal which covers the front appear fragments of linen and other substances. These are explained by the inscription engraved on the gold of the reverse side. This may be translated: "Hairs and particles of the heart, together with linen dipped in the blood of my father, Richard Langhorne, who suffered for the faith, the 14th of July, 1679."

It would thus appear that the priest who left this little cross behind him in his headlong flight was a son of Richard Langhorne, the famous barrister, who was one of the most prominent victims of the so-called Popish Plot. And, as a matter of fact, we know that Langhorne had two sons who became priests, Charles and Francis. They were both educated at the English College at Valladolid, and were sent to England as missionary priests in 1684. We do not know which of them owned the cross. But what a pathetic tale it tells! Langhorne is described even by Bishop Burnet as in every respect an extraordinary man, learned and honest in his profession. Chief Justice Scroggs, who condemned him to death amid

the loud acclamations of the mob, afterwards declared that he was convinced of his innocence. He was trusted and esteemed not only by the Catholics but by the Quakers, and was employed as counsel by the celebrated William Penn. His case was one of extraordinary hardship, for he was one of the first victims of Oates and his accomplices, who had him arrested on October 7th, 1678, and thrown into Newgate without any previous examination before a magistrate or the Council. There he was kept for more than eight months in solitary confinement and in complete ignorance of every passing event. He was not allowed to prepare his defence, or told of the charges to be brought against him. His trial was a mockery; his witnesses were abused, beaten, and intimidated, while the witnesses against him were allowed to contradict themselves as they pleased. On the scaffold he solemnly professed his innocence as to all the charges brought against him, and declared that he died a Catholic, and that his religion was the sole cause of his death. The dispositions in which he died may be gathered from the pathetic documents he left behind him, meditations and devotions made during his imprisonment, which were afterwards printed by his eldest son, Richard. Burnet (no friendly witness) calls them "very devout and well-composed meditations." They breathe, indeed, the most beautiful spirit of Christian resignation and forgiveness.



THIS DRAWING SHOWS THE ACTUAL SIZE OF THE CROSS.

No wonder that Catholics consider him a martyr, or that amid the horrors of the butchery at Tyburn some faithful friend was found to snatch, at the risk of his life, these few poor relics from the scaffold—relics which became the greatest earthly treasure of the sufferer's son. And now we see why that son also carried about with him so seemingly strange a treasure as a pack of playing cards. For on these cards were pictures of his father and of his father's friends—pictures which were a constant reminder of their sufferings and deaths.

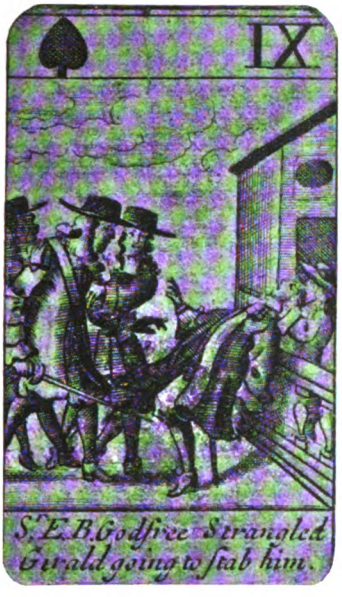
It appears that the cards were printed in the October of 1679, only three months after Langhorne's execution. During this year there was published in London, among other newspapers, "The True Domestick Intelligence, or News both from City and Country, published to prevent False Reports." In this delectable journal there appear during the months of November and December some advertisements connected with these very cards. Thus, in No. 35, for November 4th, we find the following: "The horrid Popish Plot lively represented in a Pack of Cards. Printed for Jonathan Wilkins and Jacob Sampson." In No. 50, for December 26th, occurs the following advertisement, which was reprinted in No. 53, for January 6th:—

"There is lately published a new pack of cards, neatly cut in copper, in which are represented to the life the several consults for killing the King and extirpating the Protestant Religion, the manner of the murthering of Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, the Tryalls and Executions of the Conspirators, and all other designs relating to the contrivance and management of the said horrid Popish Plot, with their attempt to throw it on the Protestants. . . . Printed and sold by Robert Walton at the Globe, on the North side of St. Paul's Churchyard near the West End, where you may have a pack for eightpence of the very best; you may have them in sheets fit to adorn studies and houses."

And now to look at the cards themselves. They are well shown in the illustrations, though thumb-marks have made them rather dirty. The designs and inscriptions are from engraved copperplates. The cards are uncoloured and the backs plain. In size they are small, being about three and a half inches by two and one-eighth.

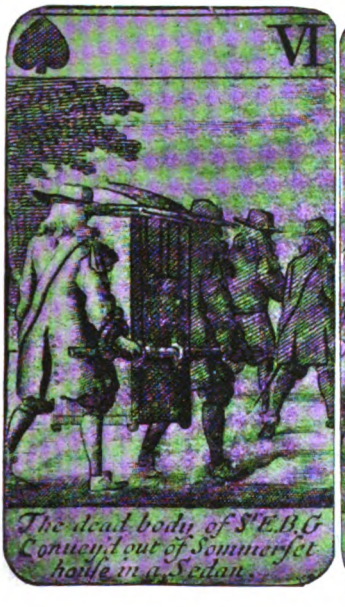
Mr. S. A. Hankey exhibited an incomplete pack of these cards before the Royal Archæological Institute in March, 1873. In his paper he drew attention to the "very singular

(and possibly unique) example of the display of popular feeling as stamped upon the ordinary appendages to mere play or amusement." He adds: "I have vainly essayed to discover a connection between the sequence of the cards under their respective suits and the order of the events which the several plates record." It is, in fact, an impossible task to arrange the cards in their suits and yet preserve the chronological order of events. The only exception is in the case of the story of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, whose alleged murder by the Papists threw all London into such a frenzy of excitement, and so powerfully helped to gain credence for the wild and ridiculous inventions of the informers. This story, as told by them, takes up the whole of the spades.



Godfrey, it will be remembered, was the magistrate before whom Titus Oates made depositions on oath (September 6th and 28th, 1678) as to the truth of his preposterous story. These were laid before the Privy Council, and the public excitement became intense. Godfrey, who was by nature given to melancholy, seems to have brooded over the terrible story entrusted to him, but he declined the advice of friends to take special precautions against the vengeance of the Papists. However, on Saturday, October the 12th, he disappeared and his dead body was found on the following Thursday in a ditch on Primrose Hill, lying face downwards and transfixed by his own sword. It was at once proclaimed that he was the victim of the Jesuits, and popular indignation against the Catholics was greatly inflamed. Godfrey became a Protestant martyr, and informers were soon found ready to disclose the secret of his death. Prance and Bedloe declared that certain Jesuits had decided on the magistrate's murder on account of his strong Protestantism and his dealings with Oates.

They had lured him into the courtyard of Somerset House, where the Queen was living, and he had there been murdered in the presence of three priests by two Catholics, Green and Hill, and Berry, a Protestant, the porter of Somerset House. This scene is shown in the nine of spades, here reproduced. Prance watched at the gates meanwhile. The body was kept in a room in the palace until the following Wednesday, when it was carried in a Sedan chair to Soho Church, as may be seen represented here on the six of spades, and then put on a horse and conveyed to Primrose Hill. Bedloe and Prance, however, disagreed completely as to almost every possible detail of the story. There can be little doubt that the unfortunate magistrate committed suicide.



Nothing, it seems, was too preposterous to be swallowed in those days of frenzy, and the cards tell the whole story of the informers, in spite of its manifest absurdities.

The "murderers," Green and Hill, were executed on

February 21st, 1679, and Berry a week later. In the three of spades given we see them all executed together. It should be added that Prance's story of the "murder" was finally retracted in 1686, when he pleaded guilty to perjury in having concocted the whole of his evidence.

The ace of hearts (here reproduced) shows us the spirit in which the whole pack of cards was conceived. The Pope and cardinals are seated at a table, hatching the plot, while conveniently close at hand, just under the table, is his satanic majesty, ready to inspire and direct them.

Then, in the four, we get Oates sent to Madrid by the Jesuits, who give him ten pounds to carry a letter to their brethren there, which letter he piously opened, and so all their diabolical schemes were laid bare.

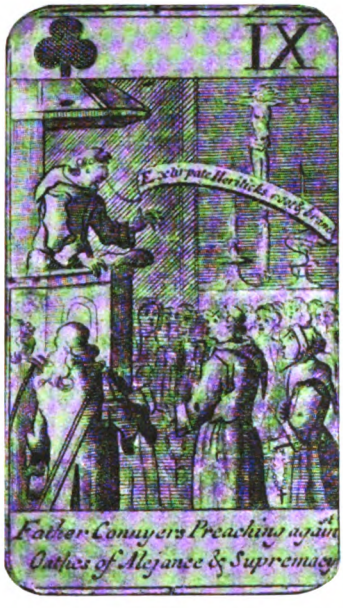
The six of hearts shows us another victim, who was, indeed, the first to suffer. Edward Coleman, the secretary to the Duchess of York, was accused of having been privy to several consults for killing the King, and to another for raising rebellion in Ireland. He suffered the terrible penalties prescribed for high treason on December 3rd, 1678, at Tyburn. He is represented as being drawn thither in a kind of sledge. In Elizabethan times the victims of the penal laws were drawn to the gibbet on a hurdle, to which they were fastened down so that they lay flat on their backs. But Coleman and the other sufferers are there represented as sitting up in a sledge. Coleman is engaged with a book of prayers. The four of hearts shows him giving a guinea to encourage the "four Irish ruffians" whom the Jesuits had hired to murder the King; and the knave (here given) shows us these mythical ruffians riding post-haste for Windsor, where they received, according to Oates, eighty pounds from Father Harcourt, S.J.

Gavan, who may be seen below on the three of hearts, was one of the five Jesuit fathers whose execution took place at Tyburn (June 20th, 1679). His brightness and innocence as a schoolboy had earned for him the name of "the Angel," and later on as a missionary his eloquent speech and musical voice made him known as "the Silver Trumpet." When the judge at his trial brutally interrupted him with the remark that there was no longer room in England for a single Papist, he calmly answered, "If only there is room for us in Heaven, I shall be happy."

In the suit of clubs, the most interesting card is the only one of the whole pack that has been mutilated. It represents the Great Fire of London, September 2nd, 1666. This was, of course, laid to the door of the Papists, and Oates swore that the Jesuits told him that they had made fourteen thousand pounds by it. They had stored up their plunder in the Queen's palace at Somerset House!

A picturesque picture is that represented on the

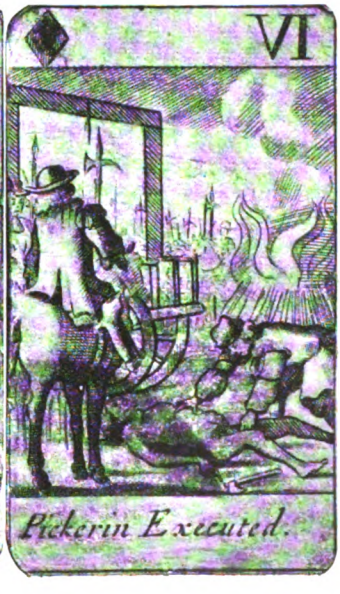
nine of clubs, here reproduced, showing Father Conyers crying from the pulpit, "Extirpate heriticks root and branch." This sermon was one of Oates's little romances. Father Conyers was also accused of having wagered a hundred pounds that he would kill the King, and of having shown Oates the formidable two-edged dagger with which he proposed to do it. Several of these cards refer to Bedloe, of whom Macaulay writes: "Bedloe, a noted swindler, followed; and soon from all the gambling-houses and spunging-houses of London false witnesses poured forth to swear away the lives of Roman Catholics." Another shows us the trial of Sir George Wakeman, the Queen's physician, in company with three Benedictines. Oates and Bedloe swore that Sir George had bargained with the Jesuits for fifteen thousand pounds to poison the King, and Oates swore that the Queen had given her consent. In this trial the shameful perjury of Oates was so well exposed by the testimony of Sir Philip Lloyd, clerk to the Privy Council, that all the prisoners were acquitted.



Turning to the diamonds, we find two cards dealing with the Benedictine lay brother Thomas Pickering. He was accused of having several times tried to shoot the King in St. James's Park, and may be seen here on the knave of diamonds, lying in ambush. He and Grove, his fellow-assassin, were to receive six thousand crowns of gold, besides which thirty thousand masses were to be offered for their souls. This was settled at the consult which Oates pretended had been held at the White Horse Tavern in the Strand. Pickering once missed a chance by the flint of his pistol being loose, and by the order of Father Whitbread, the Jesuit Provincial, he was punished for this carelessness by twenty or thirty lashes of a whip.

This absurd story did not deceive the King, who well knew the gentle lay brother, who had never fired a pistol in his life, and whose father had died fighting beneath the Royal Standard during the Civil War. He even delayed his execution, but at last he gave him over, another innocent victim, to the popular fury.

A few minutes before the cart was driven from under him one of the spectators called out that at this solemn moment he ought to confess his guilt. In an instant the monk snatched away the cap that covered his features and said, with a bright smile, "Is this the countenance of a man that dies under so gross a guilt?" The six of diamonds (here reproduced) shows the horrid details of his execution, for, like all his fellow-victims, he was dismembered and disembowelled.



The seven (given on the top of the next page) shows Sir William Waller, yet another informer, engaged in the congenial task of destroying crucifixesand Catholic books of devotion.

On other cards of this suit we see Father Thomas Whitbread represented. He was a man of great sanctity, and is said to have predicted the coming persecution some months before it broke out in a striking sermon preached to his brethren at Liége, in which he commented on our Lord's words, "Can ye drink the chalice which I am to drink?"

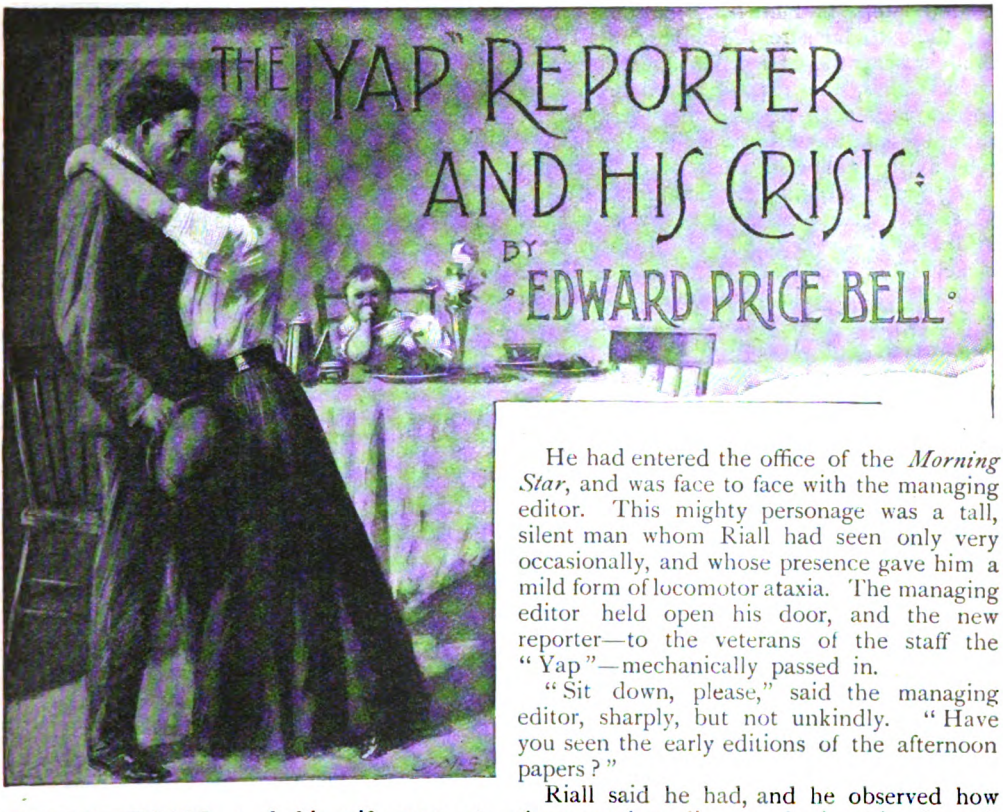
Neither his holiness, however, nor the shrewdness which is supposed to be typical of the Jesuit, prevented his being taken in most egregiously by Titus Oates, who pretended to be a zealous convert in order to gain admission to the English colleges abroad, and thus get to know the men on whose destruction he had resolved.

Father Ireland, whom we see in our last illustration drawn to execution on the two of diamonds, was a relative of the Pendrells of Boscobel, and both his father and uncle had died fighting for Charles I.

At his trial Oates and Bedloe swore that he had spent the previous August in London, arranging the details of the plot. As it happened, a journal written in his own hand, day by day, proved that from August 3rd to September 14th he was in Staffordshire. This journal he sent to the King, who was greatly troubled on reading it, but, nevertheless, had the baseness to leave this innocent man to the will of his enemies. All he did for him was to send a Capuchin father to give him the last Sacraments.

In Newgate Ireland was loaded with heavy chains, so tightly fastened as to eat into his flesh and lay bare the bones of his limbs. He met death with great serenity, praying for his murderers. The Queen kept some of his relics in her chapel and honoured him as a martyr. Charles II. is said to have told her that he well knew that Ireland and his companions were in a place where they could see that he had been forced against his will to send them to their deaths, and would pray God for him to pardon his crime. This story is probable enough, for we know that Charles himself had long been a Catholic at heart.

Here we must close our very imperfect account of this most extraordinary pack of cards. It certainly gives us reason to rejoice that we live in happier times than those in which they were produced, in the reign of the "Merry Monarch."



RIALL and his wife were at breakfast. The baby sat in a high-chair between them and sucked its fists. Riall was the incarnation of gloom. His young wife, eyeing him anxiously, said nothing.

"It's the same old story, Helen," he affirmed, folding up the *Morning Star* and putting it into his pocket. "Everyone regards the new reporter as a 'Yap.' I handed in last night a splendid account of the labour riots, and this morning I can't find it with a microscope. That head copy-reader is an idiot and a scoundrel. I've a great mind to have it out with him. Even if I am a 'Yap,' and haven't been on a great Metropolitan daily before, I think I can show them how to write!"

Before Riall went off, Helen made him kiss the baby. Then she pressed her red lips to his eyes and his mouth, twined her white arms about his neck, and begged him to remember the jobs he had lost in the country because of his hot head.

"Oh, Mr. Riall, will you kindly step in a moment?"

Riall all but fainted.

He had entered the office of the *Morning Star*, and was face to face with the managing editor. This mighty personage was a tall, silent man whom Riall had seen only very occasionally, and whose presence gave him a mild form of locomotor ataxia. The managing editor held open his door, and the new reporter—to the veterans of the staff the "Yap"—mechanically passed in.

"Sit down, please," said the managing editor, sharply, but not unkindly. "Have you seen the early editions of the afternoon papers?"

Riall said he had, and he observed how the managing editor was boring him through with his studious eyes.

"Then you know the Chippewas are on the war-path in Northern Minnesota, and have won a battle with the Regulars?"

"Yes," answered the new reporter, scarcely above a whisper.

For some weeks this young man had been under the eye of the managing editor. Repeatedly his slaughtered copy, fished out of the waste-paper basket, had been critically examined. And when he came away from his interview he carried an order on the cashier for more money than he had supposed was in the world.

Passing the city editor's room, where the star men were assembled for their assignments, Riall overheard a great babbling about the Chippewa War. Everyone was asking who would "cover" it. Riall's senses told him that this extraordinary honour had fallen to the Yap, but he might be the victim of a particularly fantastic dream. Timidly he presented his order on the cashier, and, a good deal to his astonishment, it was promptly and indifferently paid.

"Enough money," he thought, "to choke a horse." It took nearly all his pockets to

hold the bills, and he kept continually feeling them to be sure the money was there. Plunging into the clangorous street, he came upon King's, the restaurant where the reporters ate, and realized he was hungry. Entering, and mounting a high stool, he half consciously swallowed a cup of coffee and a triangle of pumpkin-pie. There were other pie-eaters on tall stools, but they were wraiths to him. He was blind to the steaming, nickel-plated urns and deaf to the clatter of dishes. In his mind was a typhoon, and in it were mixed up two beautiful faces—a woman's and a baby's—and perhaps the greatest opportunity that ever upset a new reporter.

Riall lay awake a long time that night. He was none too familiar with sleeping-cars, and the berth struck him as intolerably cramped and dark. His bag, carefully packed by his wife, with his heavy boots and leggings, was jammed under the bed, and his fur overcoat, fur cap, and other articles of apparel were stuffed in a little hammock by his side and in crevices above his head and feet. Under the pillow were the rolls of paper money and a fat-looking six-shooter glutted with cartridges.

Riall's heart swelled as he recalled the parting at the flat—the emotion of his plucky wife, the cooing of his blue-eyed boy. He ran his hand under the pillow to touch the money and to place the six-shooter so he could get it quickly. He thought of the keen, grave face of the managing editor and of his parting words:—

"Remember, Mr. Riall, we can afford anything but to be beaten."

Trying to realize the situation on the Minnesota frontier, his soul was convulsed with misgiving. He drew the blind and caught a glimpse of a wooded cliff and a glistening river.

"We're running like lightning," he thought, settling back on the pillow and listening, with closed eyes, to the shrill babble of metallic tongues.

Throughout the next day hills and valleys swam swiftly past, gemmed with ice, glorious in the garb of autumn. At Brainerd Junction, terminus of the main line, Riall had barely time to bolt a sandwich and gulp a cup of coffee, when a burly man with a lantern burst into the station restaurant and bawled:—

"All aboard for the north!"

About the new reporter surged a crowd of soldiers, railroaders, lumbermen, drummers, and war correspondents, for Brainerd Junction was the point of mobilization for the final hundred miles of single-track railway into the Minnesota wilderness. Riall elbowed his way to a seat in an ill-lighted, superheated day coach, in the midst of bags, blankets, guns, and incredible hubbub. He felt feverish in the head, and all his muscles were painfully tense. As the train sped on its way he clung to his seat, watching, listening. The war correspondents he could tell by their white faces and smart campaign outfits, and a thrill of something like horror ran through him as they gathered in a knot, of which he formed no part, and began to discuss the one slender telegraph wire to the front.

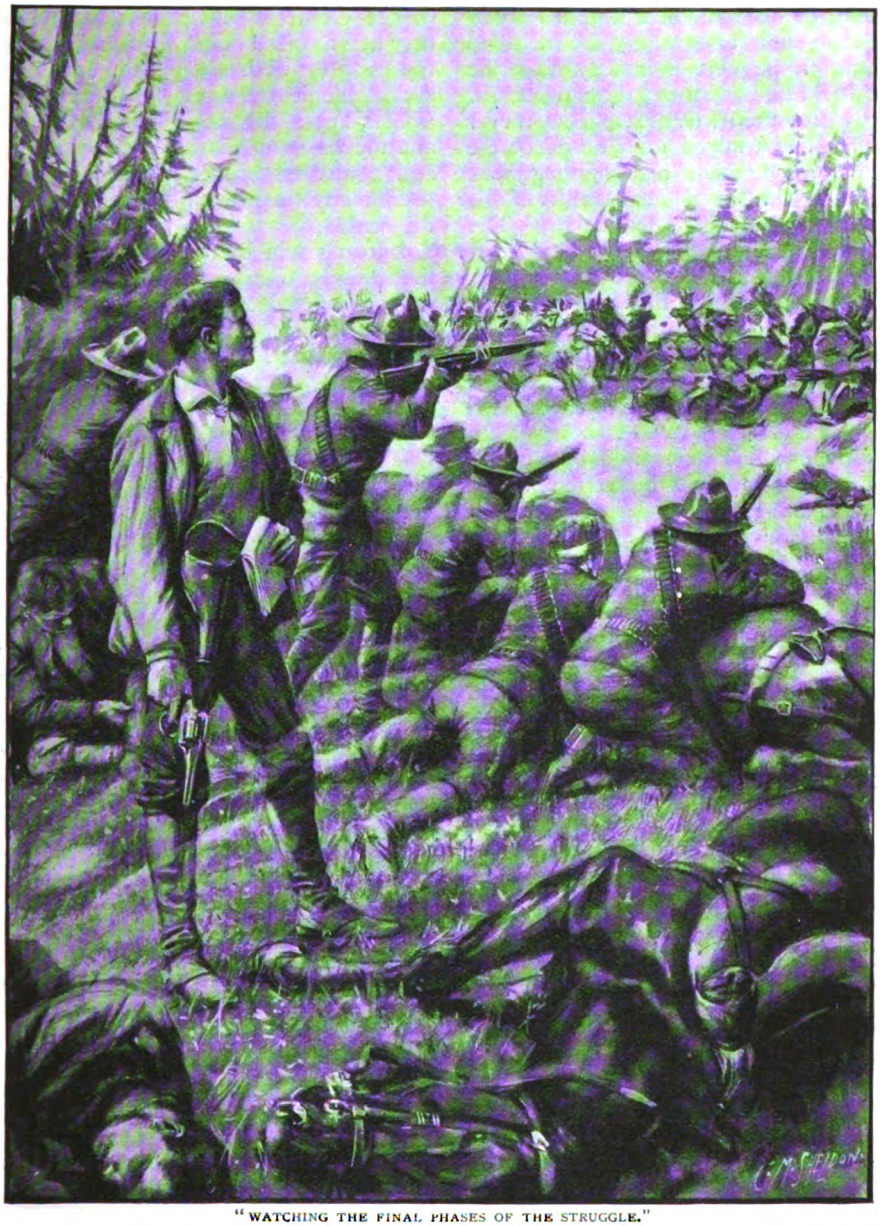
"If they get control of the wire," reflected Riall, despairingly, "it's all up with me."

Some time after midnight Riall got into an icy bed with two other men, in a room containing four beds similarly occupied, in a big, unpainted frame hotel on Leech Lake. The bedfellows appeared to know one another not at all, and none removed any of his clothing. Our anxious Yap, nascent war correspondent, followed the same plan, buttoning in the money tightly, and lying down with a firm grip on the butt of his six-shooter. In two minutes there was some snoring; in half an hour there was a nasal hurricane.

Motionless, wide-eyed, thinking, the new reporter was roused by a disquieting noise outside, a combined rumble and tramp. Though loath to move, lest he alarm someone and get himself shot, it became impossible for him to lie still. As noiselessly as possible he crept out of bed and tiptoed to the window. Field-pieces and ranks of armed men were moving off smartly towards the lake. Moreover, at a little distance, Riall perceived two smoking funnels against the translucent eastern sky.

"Bacon must be preparing for a go at them. Anyhow, it's a poor time for sleep."

So said the new reporter, sighing heavily, and drawing his fur cap low over his ears. Not exactly as a stowaway, but without anyone's formal permission, he went with the gun and troop laden boat, simply entangling himself with the soldiers in the dim dawn. Straight across the lake for the Chippewa Reservation steered the big paddle-wheel steamer. In an hour's time the smooth seven-miles voyage was over, and the disembarkation was accomplished considerably before the sun rose. As he had shipped, Riall went ashore—unnoticed or ignored. Seeing no sign of the other correspondents, he feared they might be awake in some hotter spot, but for him there could be no turning back. The



"WATCHING THE FINAL PHASES OF THE STRUGGLE."

troops with which he had come had joined thousands of others at the Reservation. For woe or weal, with this fighting machine was interlaced his fortune.

Screened by picked cavalry, General Bacon's army marched rapidly northward, close to the lake, across a bush-grown plain. Twenty miles away three parallel ridges lifted their sharp outlines into the brightening day. At the base of these the scouts reported an inter-tribal mobilization of many thousands of fully-armed Indians, including the Bear Island pillagers, for whose mettle and skill in war the Regulars cherished a dearly-bought respect.

Having left his fur coat at the Supply Camp, and with his outer pockets stuffed with hard biscuits, by courtesy of Lieutenant Hooley Riall moved on foot with the main body, next the light pack-train. His all-important money and his six-shooter were with him, but for the moment the main

implements of his equipment were a leather-bound note-book and the wherewithal to write in it. If he were ultimately saved, he knew it would be by virtue of these talismans.

Exactly how the battle began Riall never knew. He had trudged until his feet were blistered and he was half fainting with fatigue, when his heart was sent into his mouth by a deafening detonation. The pack-train had stopped, and the army was rapidly breaking into a wide deployment, covering the face of the three ridges. The troops were under a scattering group of oaks, and the air was full of falling leaves, brilliantly coloured. High up sounded a music new to the Yap reporter—the ping, whizz, and zip of the orchestra of war.

Not quite effectually surprised by Bacon's forced march, the Indians beat a retreat into the ravines among the ridges, took up their accustomed style of warfare, and spread the fighting over a large area. Planning and striking independently, covering behind rocks and trees, advancing, running away, each of the red men, using his rifle until too hard pressed, finally closed with the enemy in a desperate hand-to-hand combat for life and victory.

Three hours of purgatory.

It left the Yap reporter, hatless, powder-stained, parched with thirst, hugging the spur of a hill and watching the final phases of the struggle. His point of vantage he had gained through smoke and over the prostrate forms of horses and men. General Bacon had been killed. Lieutenant Hooley and a body of infantry Riall had seen fall into an ambush and perish to a man. Also he had seen a thousand pillagers shoot out from the trees on Bear Island in birch-bark canoes, land under a galling fire from Bacon's inadequate rearguard, quickly form into regular battle array, and make a deadly assault on the Regular reserves.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the distraught Yap, "how can I tell this story—even if I ever get out alive and reach the wire?"

Clear, stinging, star-emblazoned night over the northern waste. On an officer's mount, caught riderless and bloody, Riall pressed southward. From a half-breed scout he had it that the Regulars, in the end, occupied the whole field of battle—the valleys and the hills—pitching their tents in the midst of six thousand dead Chippewas.

Bodily like ice, mentally aflame, anon scribbling in the half-light as he rode, piece by piece rebuilding the terrible mosaic of the day—the ghastly, heroic, piteous, bewildering scenes—Riall felt his head must burst and his heart bleed out its death-agony in the solitary wild. Courage and purpose, almost life itself, abode by the magic of a woman's eyes, the melody of a baby's tongue, and the vision of a trustful managing editor and a vast newspaper plant waiting in the distant city to give his tremendous story to the world.

Drawing rein by the improvised wharf at the Supply Camp, behind him a tedious gauntlet of challenging sentinels, Riall found the last steamer for the night gone. Out of the north-west had sprung a biting wind that brought the waves racing noisily in on the gravelly beach. With a great longing Riall gazed across the frothy waters. Against the blackness of the farther shore glowed a cluster of lights—the telegraph office. Mastering a pang of despair, the Yap got stiffly down, stretched his benumbed limbs, and made for the commandant's tent.

"Your purpose to get to the other shore to-night," said the officer, after he had given horse and rider of his best, "is madness."

Twenty miles of hills stretched round the southern end of the lake between the Supply Camp and the coveted lights. These hills were infested by hostile Chippewas. To the north the lake widened and extended for thirty miles. So Riall, using his money freely, induced two civilized Indians to launch their birch-bark canoe. One knelt on a bunch of hay in the bow, striking with his paddle to the right; the other sat in the stern, striking with his paddle to the left. The new reporter, his fur coat restored to him and a warm cap on his head, deposited himself in the bottom of the boat in the centre, an arm on either gunwale.

"Since you *will* go, my boy," cried the commandant, as he pushed them off, "keep a stiff upper lip, and God bless you!"

Swell after swell, powerful and rhythmic, bore down on the grim-faced white man and the grimmer-faced Indians. Their flimsy bark rocked and dipped like a cockle-shell. Savagely slapping its bows, the waves broke into spray and turned to ice in the air. Beneath Riall's legs were a ceaseless hissing, scudding, and gurgling. Distinctly he felt the tickling impact of the water through the thin birch-bark wall. Knowing a little English, the Indian in the bow spoke neither English nor Chippewa. Far too busy was he digging his paddle into oncoming waves and lifting the nose of the canoe above their curling crests.

At first Riall was paralyzed with fear. But

he watched the bow-paddler with ever-growing confidence. Never before had he seen so marvellous a use of eye, wit, and muscle. Lively respect for the Chippewa he had acquired on the battlefield that day; it grew to exaltation as he watched this lean, lynx-eyed red man again and again beating under the tempestuous rush of the wolfish flood. So easy in mind did he become that sleep gradually drew him to full length in the bottom of the canoe.

"HE WATCHED THE BOW-PADDLER WITH EVER-GROWING CONFIDENCE."

Then the Indians watched and fought alone—quick-moving silhouettes on the foaming water. Now and again, from bow to stern, from stern to bow, rang a sharp monosyllable, but for the most part the red men were deathly silent.

Suddenly a touch of intense cold on Riall's warm flesh brought him sharply erect, terror-struck. The canoe had sprung a leak. People on either shore must have heard the white man's shriek, but the bow-paddler gave no heed. "The boat is leaking!" "The boat is leaking!" Still the Indians were dumb, but Riall detected a quick nod of the bow-paddler's head and became aware that their course had been sharply shifted.

Peering intently forward, after some minutes of paddling as noiseless as it was strenuous, the Yap descried a huge object, black and flat, apparently running into them. He also noted that the water was calmer, and knew they had gained the lee of something. The efforts of the Indians relaxed. Riall could hear their deep breathing. On his ears then broke a sweet music, the grate of the canoe on gravel.

"Now for the wire!" cried the correspondent, springing ashore as the bow-paddler drew the nose of the canoe clear of the surf. All about, utter darkness. Scrambling to the top of a ragged rock and straining his eyes in all directions, at last Riall caught sight of the lights—a mile away across the boiling lake! Having taken the canoe from the water, the Indians were proceeding with it inland. Riall sprang after them, vaguely suspecting treachery.

"How's this?" he demanded, grasping the bow-paddler roughly by the shoulder.

With a grim smile, and very quietly, the Indian explained that they had not reached the mainland; that they had run for safety to the southern tip of Bear Island.

Would they, could they, go on?

"Well, we can start," said the bow-paddler, significantly.

"Then let us!" retorted Riall, freshly aghast at the spectre of failure.

With dry moss and birch twigs the Indians built a fire. The Yap reporter, having parted with more money, lay in a drift of crisp leaves and looked on. It was ten o'clock only; there was still hope. The canoe rested on the ground bottom-side up. Shaving off papery strips of birch bark, the Indians

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boiled out the oil with firebrands and glued the layers of bark tightly over the breaks in their cork-like craft.

"We can't go straight for the lights," said the bow-paddler when the job was finished; "we must pull a quartering course, aiming to land five miles to the south-westward."

Rather than a canoe voyage, it was a flight in an ill-tamed airship, a race on the back of a mad porpoise, that quartering to the south-westward. It ended not five, but ten, miles out of the straight course to the lights, the canoe caked in ice and sinking, the Indians ice-coated bronze brownies, Riall a veritable Santa Claus. Forging up the bank, shedding icicles as he ran, Riall found himself on the railway. Casting back a brief glance, he was strangely moved by two black specks on the rim of the lake—his Chippewa deliverers—gliding fleetly about making camp.

"Must be pushed for time," hailed a track-walker whom Riall met as he strode forward. The track-walker was moving slow, examining the road-bed as he went along.

"I am, a little," answered the correspondent, glancing at the man's Winchester and his lantern swathed in red flannel. He then pointed towards the distant lights. "Have you been up there to-night?"

"Left there at eight."

"Suppose the telegraph office is doing business all right?"

"I reckon it would be if the wire wasn't cut."

Riall was a bit uncertain for a moment whether the track-walker had spoken or struck.

"Air you one o' them newspaper fellers?" queried the track-walker, curiously.

"Yes."

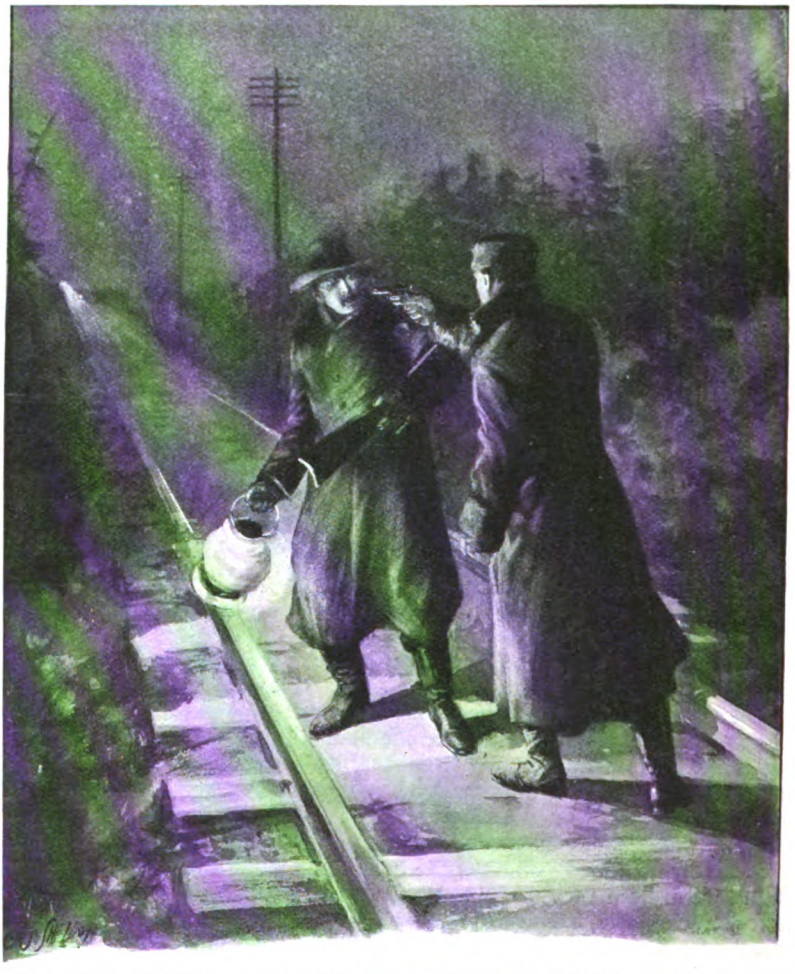
"Then I guess you're in hard luck to-night; the whole pack of 'em's on the lumber train bound for Brainerd Junction."

It did not sound much like a locomotive whistle—that shrill, weird, asthmatic squeak in the nipping cold—but Riall divined that it heralded the lumber train, and the lumber train made all the difference.

"For Heaven's sake," he cried, stretching out his hands to the track-walker, "stop that train!"

"Sorry, old man; but I'd be murdered."

No time for bargaining, no time to invoke the sorcery of his hidden money. One



"'BY HEAVEN!' SCREAMED RIALL, WITH UNEARTHLY FIERCENESS; 'STOP THAT TRAIN, OR YOU WILL BE MURDERED!'"

moment of frozen mental blank, then Riall's faculties responded. The next instant the track-walker was smelling the six-shooter.

"By Heaven!" screamed Riall, with unearthly fierceness; "stop that train, or you *will* be murdered, and no mistake!"

When the mighty engine came to a standstill—and it came to a standstill as promptly as the track-walker could manage it—Big Dan, conductor of the train, rushed hot-foot from the caboose, or workmen's car, running towards the engine on the long string of flat-cars, his lantern dangling and his heavy boots crunching the gravel. Now Big Dan, man of awful oaths and pitiless sledge-hammer fists, had a heart like his body—not hard and rough like his body, but big like his body was big. Bent on vengeance, if vengeance were due, by the engine he saw a haggard-faced rag of a man—more a boy, he thought—in an ice-crusted coat, gripping a six-shooter.

Big Dan needed no one to tell him that this man had suffered.

Neither needed he anyone to tell him that this rag of a man was brave.

And Big Dan's god of gods was the god of courage.

On a box of fish sat Riall, in a closed car, next the engine. By his side was Big Dan's lantern. In his leather-bound note-book he hurried on with the story of the battle, often making wild, unintelligible marks, owing to the jolting and lurching of the train. He wrote bare-handed, and it was deadly cold. He yearned for the red-hot stove in the caboose. There, at their ease, his rivals lounged, smoked, chatted, slept. But the caboose was three hundred yards in the rear, and Big Dan had been in whispered conversation with the engineer. The telegraph office was the supreme objective. Whoever reached it first would be monarch of the situation for that night.

Time escaped reckoning. Pages and pages of the note-book were full. Fevered by the story, Riall was unaware that his nervous fire was burning very low; that his bodily functions were slowing down; that he was yielding to some insidious, tightening, overmastering assailant of the senses. The light was dim; the bedlam of the train was softened; the floor did not bump and sway so violently; the engine's hiss and shriek were singularly faint; the pounding of the drivers was like the pulsing of a lullaby. With a desperate effort Riall sprang up and paced dizzily to and fro. Harder became the pressure on his brain, and he struck out wildly against his potent, intangible, baffling adversary.

Comfortable on his hair-stuffed cushion, Big Dan viewed the onward rush of the lumber train from the top of the caboose. Finishing his midnight lunch, he fastened the lid on his dinner-pail and lit his pipe. The flying train, bending like a monster eel round the curves and wriggling over the inequalities of the track, stirred no uneasiness in his mind. Often, indeed, in his time he had gone into the ditch; but far more often, miraculous as it seemed, gaily and safely he had ridden over every peril. Wrinkles massed about his eyes and his mouth puckered. He was thinking of the young chap with the six-shooter and the obedient track-walker with the Winchester.

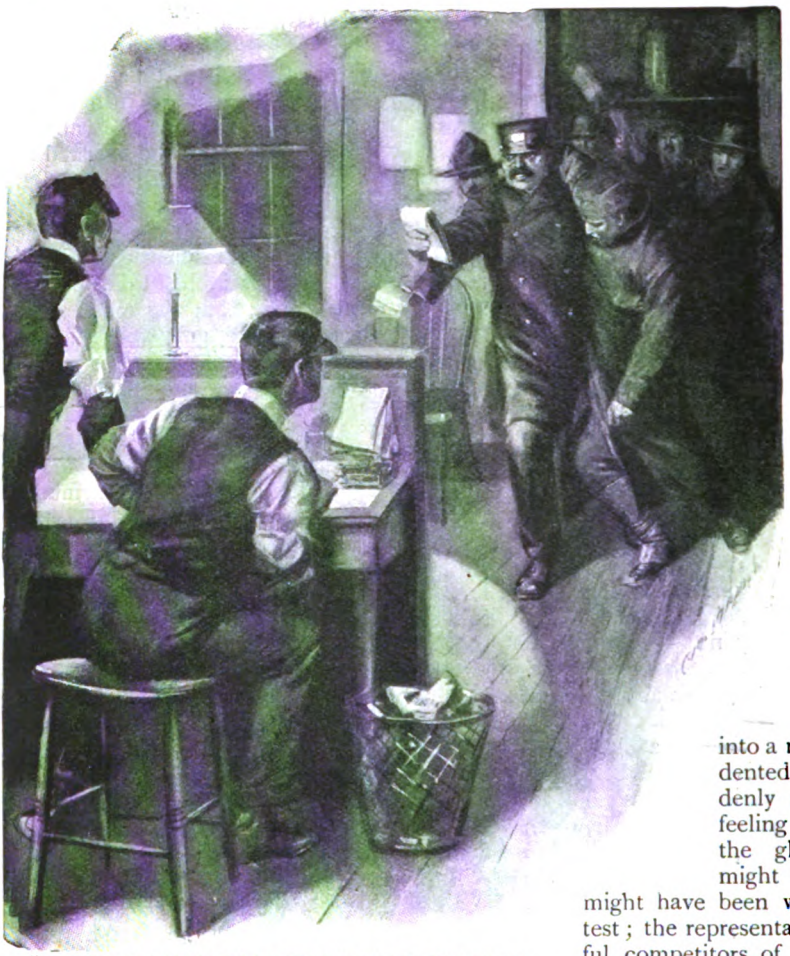
"That lad's the right sort," he mused. "He said he had a big story and must beat the other fellows to the wire or be ruined. And he looked it. Great Scot! for all I know there may a-been a battle; plenty of soldiers about. I don't know what's in the lad's head, but as sure as death, he's got those fellows in the caboose cornered."

Dropping a side window, Big Dan thrust out his head and shouted some order to a brakeman starting forward over the lumber.

"Great heavens!" he ejaculated, banging the window shut, "that air cuts like steel! Blessed if I ain't afraid that boy'll freeze!"

Busily hummed key and sounder in the all-hours telegraph office at Brainerd Junction. Dry and hot was the air of the lamp-lit room, and the half-dozen coatless operators, faces obscured by green eyeshades, arms enveloped in bloomer-like black sleevelets, toiled at the final train despatches of the night. Sharply they all looked up when, just outside, thundered to a full-stop the "Mogul" of the lumber train. Always before the engine went by; the thing that stopped at the telegraph office was the caboose. Far back towards the end of the train rose a muffled shouting. The languid operators started from their chairs. Sounded a hurried impact of heavy feet on cinders. Then, with great violence, the door was flung open, and out of the Arctic night struggled the gigantic form of Big Dan—on his heels a panting throng, in his arms a limp figure, a leather-bound note-book in his great bony right hand.

Vast and indistinct lay the great city in the early dawn. Under a shaded light by the fire sat Helen, waiting. Somewhere within his blue silk draperies the boy was asleep.



"OUT OF THE ARCTIC NIGHT STRUGGLED THE GIGANTIC FORM OF BIG DAN."

Helen could scarcely restrain a sob of suspense when she heard on the stairway a much-belated footstep. Going quickly to the door, she took in the *Morning Star*. Under the light she spread it out with trembling hands. The paper did not look at all natural. One heavy black line lay full across the top of the first page: "Terrific Battle in the Minnesota Wilderness." Followed other lines, shorter and less black, but bold and striking: "General Bacon and many other officers killed. Three hours of desperate hand-to-hand fighting. Twenty-five per cent. of the regular forces lost. Six thousand Chippewas slain."

Eagerly and fearfully Helen's eyes sped down the deep head-lines. Burst on her vision, at the bottom, a group of letters blindingly bright—a radiant reality eclipsing her full-orbed hope. It told that the writer, the one capable of so transforming the features of the great conservative *Morning Star*, was the country boy—he who had suffered so acutely as the Yap reporter—her husband. With the title, "Our Special War Correspondent," there was his full name, Edgar Robert Riall, standing forth magnificently in the face alike of colleague and of rival, and before all the hundreds of thousands of people whose mirror of life was the *Morning Star*.

Translated, Helen felt herself, into a new world, unprecedentedly sweet. But suddenly the tide of joyous feeling ebbed. After all, the glorious conception might be illusory; Edgar might have been worsted in the contest; the representatives of the powerful competitors of the *Morning Star* might have beaten him in matter or manner, or in both; compared with their productions his story might be fatally deficient. Escape from the thought Helen sought in the baby—in his eyes, deliciously blue; in his face, rosy and full of laughter; in his elastic little mouth, wrapping its scarlet thread busily about the words and sounds of his peculiar eloquence and music. The sunflood, long stemmed by the adjacent buildings, billowed goldenly into the room.

The bell rang.

A special messenger from the *Morning Star*.

"The managing editor's compliments to Mrs. Riall," ran the note. "He regrets to say that Mr. Riall is in bed (at Brainerd Junction, Minnesota) from severe exposure—determined, however, in a day or two to return to the front. The managing editor would add that, in some way as yet quite unaccountable, the young man has astoundingly beaten the world."

The Career of a Singer.

By Mme. CLARA BUTT.

ALTHOUGH the glamour of the concert platform does not fascinate its votaries so keenly as the stage proper, it nevertheless has so great an attraction that there are hundreds of young people who have, or are induced to believe they have, the makings of a voice, and who decide to enter the ranks of the profession without any idea, in many cases, how small is their chance of success.

It is in the hope that I may be of some real assistance to these would-be "stars" that I have undertaken, at the request of the Editor of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, to put upon paper a few hints likely to be of value to young aspirants to concert platform laurels.

To begin with, I may say at once that no amount of advice which I or anyone else could give would be likely to lead to the easy or immediate success of any of the young singers who read these remarks, or of the hosts of correspondents who bombard me with letters asking for help and advice.

Let me impress upon the young singer anxious to shine on the concert platform that here, as in so many other careers, there is no royal road to success. On the contrary, there are not only many difficulties to be encountered and numerous rebuffs to be faced, but a great deal of downright hard work—I might even say drudgery—to be performed. In addition to a *voice* that is naturally good and capable of attaining a really high pitch of excellence under careful training, together with some amount of dramatic power, the would-be *prima donna* must possess courage and determination to a very marked degree. Assuming, however, that she has these qualifications, more or less, I can, I think, give some useful hints and advice which, if followed conscientiously, should produce good results.

My first hint must partake of the nature of a warning. Young singers eager to improve their voices and anxious to reach the highest point of proficiency in the shortest possible time invariably make the mistake of doing too much with their voices. A break-down, possibly a very serious one, is bound to occur sooner or later. Somehow or other would-be singers altogether fail to realize how extremely delicate the muscles of the larynx are, and what a tremendous strain is put upon them by even a single hour's vocal practice. Indeed, I do not exaggerate when I say that the other muscles of the body suffer less after a whole day's labour than do the sensitive muscles of the throat after but one hour's work.

Personally, I have always been a firm believer in the "go-easy-at-first" method, which I found produced excellent results in my own case, and a period of ten or fifteen minutes per day in the early part of her training is all that I can safely recommend to the singer. Later on, of course, as the throat muscles become stronger, this period may be considerably extended, and the vocal exercises may safely be repeated at intervals during the day. It will be seen that in my opinion the case of the singer is exactly analogous to that of the athlete, whose muscles, even rival physical culturists agree, are best developed by a carefully-graded course of exercises. The evolution of the "heavy weight-lifting" champion is not a matter of days or even of weeks of practice; it is a question of many months, if not years.

Mention of athletics reminds me that violent bodily exercises should be left severely alone during this period of voice culture. I have a theory that the chest should be developed almost entirely by breathing and singing exercises, for there are very few forms of physical exercise which do not work more harm than good to the chest and throat. Remember, then, that the road to the

concert platform does not pass through the gymnasium, and that vocal gymnastics should as far as possible take the place of violent bodily exercise.

I am, of course, quite aware that this question of bodily exercise is very closely related to that of health in general. I therefore feel that, in justice to myself, I ought at this point to remind my readers that it is only *violent* forms of exercise that I condemn, for no one realizes more keenly than myself the supreme importance of good health to a singer. Mild exercise taken in moderation

MME. CLARA BUTT.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

is, of course, an essential factor of good general health, and should form a regular feature of the singer's daily life. I may say that throughout my whole career I have never lost sight of the fact that the whole tone of one's performance is affected to a remarkable degree by the general state of one's health.

Again, so intimate is the connection between mind and body that the physical health of a singer is bound to suffer if mental worries are allowed to take possession of the mind. Anything which tends to harass or depress the student should be banished, or at any rate kept in the background as much as possible, during the early stages of training. It would indeed be difficult to exaggerate the bad effects of mental depression upon the voice. In short, I am quite convinced that mental worry or depression is almost as fatal to the progress of the aspirant as ill-health or malformation of the organs of speech.

It is a great mistake, though unfortunately a very common one with young singers, to exercise the throat too much before rendering a song. It is, I consider, most essential that before singing in public the vocalist should give her throat some sort of a rest, otherwise she cannot expect to have her voice at its best on the concert platform. For my own part I put in most of my practice between the hours of eleven and one each day, and when on tour, in order to keep my voice as fresh as possible for the platform, I am careful not to practise too much. Moreover, I confine my practising almost entirely to exercises, my song studies being pursued in accordance with what I may perhaps call the "quiet" method—that is to say, I study them away from the piano altogether. I have great faith in this method, for I believe that the effect of a song can be judged much better when rendered in this way than when practised over and over again with accompaniment, and there is, of course, a great saving of vocal effort—a point to be kept steadily in view by all singers.

Faulty enunciation is another mistake to which the young singer is prone. In fact, so common is it that it may almost be regarded as a universal failing among amateur vocalists. Many and many a beautiful song has been completely spoilt by the indistinct utterance of the singer, who, in her anxiety to do full justice to the music, has allowed the words to take care of themselves. Music so rendered is, I need hardly say, quite ineffective. In oratorio, where the words play a most important part in the interpretation of the piece, bad enunciation becomes a very serious mistake indeed. The late Queen Victoria once told me that her enjoyment of my

singing was very greatly enhanced by the clearness of my enunciation, and I esteemed that high compliment all the more because it so fully reflected my own views on this question. Enjoyment of vocal music — of oratorio especially — cannot be complete unless every word pronounced by the singer is heard distinctly by every member of the audience.

One thing I would specially advise is to watch the best-known artistes of the concert hall as often as possible, not with a view to becoming a professional mimic—as, alas! a large number of singers have done—but in order to make a careful study of their grasp of detail. Much can be learnt in this way by an intelligent and observant student who is not above taking a hint from "those who have succeeded."

There will be ample scope for originality of treatment. Mere parrot-like mimicry of some famous interpreter of a part should be scrupulously avoided, for in singing, as in everything else, nothing is more unsatisfactory than mere slavish imitation of a model, however good that model may be. In short, I would say to every beginner: "Saturate yourself with the spirit of the part allotted to you till every shade of the composer's meaning is perfectly clear to you."

Now, I am just a little afraid that, as a consequence of what I have said, some very earnest young singer, in attempting faithfully to act upon the hints I have just given about the careful study of a piece of music, may go too far and fall into a very common error. On no account, therefore, allow your emotions to master your self-control. I can assure you that it is quite possible for a singer to convey all the feeling and emotion intended by the composer without losing the self-command which is so essential on the platform.

I once knew a very famous singer who could never render a certain solo without weeping. Now, I have no reason whatever for believing that this display of emotion was other than genuine, but I am not so sure that the singer's audience were equally convinced, for realistic touches savour too much of affectation to really move an audience. If there is one thing more than another that the average audience dislikes it is "platform hysterics," and the average concert-goer recognises as the true artiste only that singer who, in the rendering of an emotional song, while completely retaining her own self-possession, at the same time succeeds in conveying to her audience the feeling and pathos expressed both by words and music of the song.

In opera, of course, greater latitude may be allowed to the singer when playing an emotional part, for there is a wide scope for the display of dramatic action and feeling in opera which does not exist on the concert platform. Indeed, I have heard of more than one famous operatic star making herself really unhappy when playing some particular scene in which she was supposed to be in great distress.

Now, I am quite sure that this "platform self-control" is one of the most difficult things for a young singer to acquire, but, at the same time, it is one of the most indispensable qualifications to any who hope to achieve success in public. Nothing is more likely to upset the beginner and to menace with failure an otherwise satisfactory performance than an attack of "nerves." Unfortunately, I am not in a position to suggest a remedy for this most distressing of platform evils. I can only offer sympathy and throw out a reminder that most singers at one time or another suffer from this vexatious complaint, although I have never suffered from it myself.

This is, I fear, but cold comfort; however, the novice may take heart from the knowledge that stage-fright—or should I say "platform-fright"?—is, as a rule, peculiar to the early stages of a soloist's career. Howbeit, many even of our greatest vocalists admit that they are often—even habitually—nervous, though perhaps the fact is not apparent to the audience. For instance, every popular soloist knows the inspiriting effect of the applause that greets a successful effort on the concert platform. In oratorio performed in a cathedral there is, on the contrary, no such stimulating encouragement, and the singer accustomed to the vigorous clapping of the concert-hall is at first apt to be somewhat discomposed by the dead silence that follows her rendering of a solo in a sacred edifice. In my own case, however, I love singing in a cathedral. For one thing the acoustic properties are better than those of a hall, and for another there seems to be something in the atmosphere of a cathedral that harmonizes with the spirit of the work and thereby conduces to better results.

I suppose that everybody whose profession keeps them constantly before the public has reminiscences and anecdotes to tell of an interesting and amusing nature. For my part there have been many incidents in my career which have indelibly impressed themselves

upon my mind, and upon which I look back with feelings of amusement or pleasure. I remember most vividly, for instance, a very amusing and touching occurrence in connection with an occasion a year or two ago, when I was advertised to appear at the Albert Hall. Upon arriving at the Hall on the day of the concert I was informed that a parcel had come for me. As I had not been expecting any parcel, my curiosity was aroused as to what it might contain, and as soon as I had time I proceeded to open it. Imagine my surprise when I found it contained, very carefully packed in tissue paper and wadding, a particularly large pear. At first sight there is nothing specially amusing or touching about a pear, nor did I myself appreciate the situation until I found, at the bottom of the box, a letter from a poor widow, who said that, through having heard me sing on several occasions, she had come to feel a very real affection for me; and that, seeing I was to appear at the Albert Hall, she thought it would refresh my throat and voice afterwards to eat a pear, and she had therefore picked the very finest one in her garden to send me, in the hope that the pleasure it gave me might prove some slight return for the pleasure the sender had derived from hearing me sing.

Alas! by the time I received it the pear was quite rotten.

Particular songs seem to have particular effects upon audiences. Thus, almost invariably after I have sung "Abide with Me" I get odd requests and not infrequently presents of jewellery. Needless to say, I invariably return such tokens of regard, although occasionally awkward situations arise—particularly if the anonymous giver is an eccentric, as sometimes is the case—which require the employment of a considerable amount of tact.

Particularly if one does a lot of touring one is bound to have amusing experiences. I remember very well something which occurred to me in a small town through which I passed in a motor during one summer. I had recently been singing somewhere in the neighbourhood, and when my husband got out at the local chemist's shop in order to get a dose to cure a bad headache I had, the young chemist who came out to me evidently recognised who I was. Realizing that here was an opportunity for a good piece of business, he asked me whether I would object to trying a dose of a certain throat tonic made up from a prescription of his own. Needless to say, I preferred to let well alone, and declined therefore to do so. Seeing that I was not to be persuaded, he at once went in and got me a draught, which, I am thankful to say, cured me of my headache in quite a short time. Many weeks afterwards we happened to motor through the same town. Imagine my surprise when on passing that chemist's shop I found the window placarded with boldly-printed advertisements for So-and-so's throat tonic, "as patronized by Madame Clara Butt"! As I had straightly refused to have anything to do with his throat tonic, I was naturally very much surprised and annoyed, and my husband forthwith alighted and demanded an explanation. The young man was no whit abashed, but stated, with a smile, that the placards were perfectly correct, since when I called before he had given me eight grains of phenacetin in a dose of the throat tonic. I was so impressed by the astuteness of his little ruse that I did no more than obtain his promise to stop from that time the statements he had been circulating.

I have during my life met with quite a number of different accidents. Upon one occasion, I remember, I was pitched from a very high-wheeled dogcart on to my head and picked up for dead. The nearest house, which was nearly two miles away, happened to be that of Lady Redesdale, and to this I was conveyed. A doctor was sent for, who, after an examination, stated that I was suffering from concussion of the brain. Thanks, however, to the kindness and attention of Lady Redesdale, I did not take long in recovering, and the only ill-effect of the accident that I feel to-day is a slight nervousness when driving.

Upon another occasion my husband and I set out after dinner, meaning to have an hour's row on the river. It was quite dark by the time we reached the river-bank, and by mistake we stepped into a small dinghy instead of a large one. In a moment the boat upset and we were in the water, but my husband, as we fell, grasped me by the hair, and as we were close to the landing-stage we were eventually hauled out, with nothing worse to complain of than a bad wetting.

It was shortly after this incident that I received a somewhat amusing letter from a lady in New Zealand. It ran as follows:—

DEAR MADAM,—I am writing to express to you my deep gratitude that you were not drowned on the occasion of your boating accident in the Thames not long ago. Your escape is an event which gives me courage to write to you—a thing I have been intending to do for a long time past.

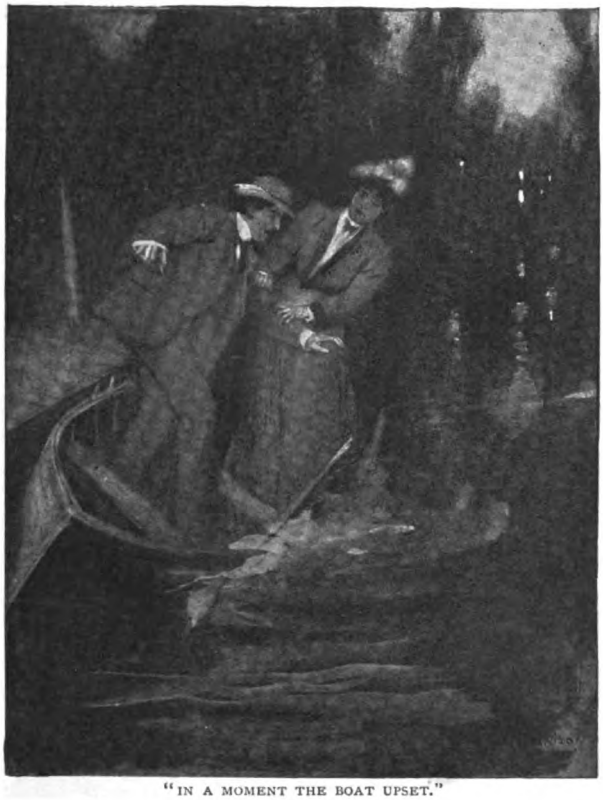
A year or two ago I read an interview with you, in

the course of which you stated that you were very fond of monkeys. Now, madam, ever since I read that interview I have been quite sure that we must be related, for my mother was also passionately fond of monkeys. I have tried in vain to trace the name of Butt in our family, but, although my second cousin married a Mr. Budd, I cannot find the name of Butt anywhere in our family tree.

The fact that you were married at Bristol is another proof that I am right, for my mother once lived there. I hope one day to hear you sing, but, whether I do so or not, I feel it an honour that you should be connected with our family. — Believe me, dearest madam,

Your affectionate relation,

———— ————.



"IN A MOMENT THE BOAT UPSET."

While I am on the subject of curious letters I may as well, perhaps, mention a few more. I have already referred at the commencement of this article to the host of correspondents who bombard me almost daily with requests for advice. Many of these letters are pathetic, some are amusing, almost all are interesting. One gentleman wrote and offered to let me adopt his only daughter if I would undertake to teach her to sing. He informed me that he was willing to pay for her board and lodging, but added that he could not do so at once. His suggestion was that the amount expended in this way, which he estimated at ten shillings a week, should be deducted from the fees she earned when she became a star.

The following letter from an evidently very simple young lady who possessed a cousin with a sense of humour amused me very much at the time, and may, perhaps, amuse readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE:—

DEAR MADAM,—I hope you will forgive a total stranger for having the presumption to presume to write to you. I have just commenced to take singing lessons, and, having heard you sing the other day, have made up my mind to take it up professionally. Mother says I have a nice voice, but the people next door sent in last night to ask me to stop practising, but I don't mean to be put off by difficulties, but mean to be some day a big singer like you. My voice is rather squeaky as yet, but can you tell me whether sweet oil will alter this, as my cousin says it will, and how much ought I to take at a time? He says you will be sure to tell me if I write and ask you. And will you please tell me does tight-lacing affect the voice, and ought I to take any special diet? I am only sixteen, but hope to be seventeen soon, so hope you will answer this most presumptious.

I don't think I have ever had so many letters as reached me this spring, when my intention of touring for many months in Australia was announced. Every post has brought me numerous epistles begging me to reconsider my arrangements. I was very much touched by one particular letter I received from an old lady who was quite unknown to me. She told me that she was seventy-eight and in very feeble health, so that she did not know whether she would be alive when I returned to England next spring. She had, she said, been present at almost every concert where I had sung in London for many years past, and it grieved her very deeply to think that during perhaps the last nine months of her life she would not be able to hear my voice.

I will only refer to one more letter, but it is, I think, quite worthy to rank with those already quoted. It is dated March 10th, 1907, and I will give it in full:—

MADAM,—I note that, together with your husband and a large party, you will leave England almost immediately after your farewell concert at the Albert Hall on June 29th for an extended tour in Australia. I have long held the opinion that the ordinary concert is of too uniform and unvaried a character, and I believe that, if some bright turn were added to lighten the proceedings, much larger audiences would be attracted. I write, therefore, to offer you my services upon your Australian tour, and to say that, in addition

to being an accomplished skirt-dancer, I am also able to give attractive exhibitions as a contortionist. I feel sure that you would find me a most desirable addition to your party, and that if you took me with you to Australia the entire success of the tour would be ensured. Kindly make an appointment, when we can discuss terms.

A good many people are, I believe, under the impression that black cats are exceedingly lucky. Personally, though I do not pretend to be very superstitious, I must admit to a slight leaning towards this belief, since I have myself had several experiences with black cats. More than once black cats have been mixed up in some way or another with concerts which have proved big successes. Not long ago, while my husband and I were in Bradford giving a concert there, we were just in the middle of a duet when the audience began to titter in so marked a manner that I at once came to the conclusion that something was wrong. My husband looked round and found that the cause of amusement was a very large black cat, which was strolling quite composedly across the platform. While I went on with my part of the duet my husband vigorously attacked the enemy and attempted to frighten it away, but instead of giving ground it put up its back and spat at him so determinedly that the song had to be stopped until the laughter which resulted had subsided. I may mention that the concert was one of the most successful ones of the whole of the tour upon which we were engaged.

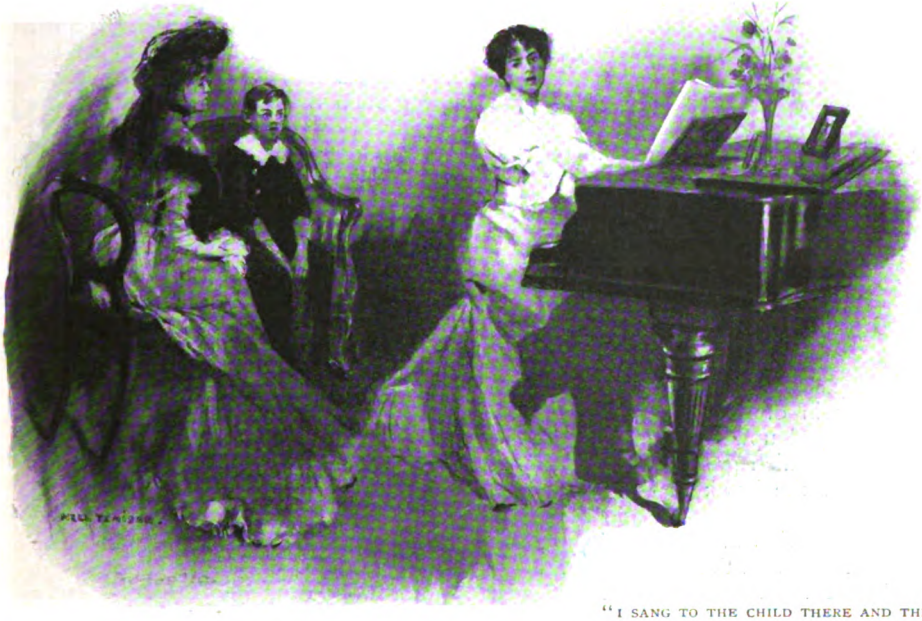
In conclusion, I may perhaps recount what I consider to be the most unusual and extraordinary of all my experiences. I have never told anyone the facts about it before. About two years ago, after singing at a concert in London, I arrived home to find a small parcel awaiting me that had been left by an express messenger. Upon opening it I found that it contained a very beautiful diamond star and a letter in a sealed envelope. Bursting with curiosity, I broke the seals and found it contained an urgent request from a lady that she might be allowed to bring her sick child to my house for me to sing to him.

"IT PUT UP ITS BACK AND SPAT AT HIM."

Her idea in sending the diamond star was that I might accept it as a kind of fee. Being so fond of children myself, and knowing how great must be the mother's grief at the illness of her child, I made an appointment for her to call the very next afternoon, and sent my message to her at the hands of a servant, who also took back, needless to say, her piece of jewellery. Imagine my surprise when I found that the child was not sick physically, but was an imbecile.

With tears in her eyes the mother explained

that she had taken her boy to the concert where I was singing the day before, and had been astounded to notice that during my song his attention seemed to have been strangely attracted, while there came into his assistance, as she called it, towards the boy's recovery. It appeared that the alteration in him had become so marked that she had taken him to a specialist, who had ordered a special course of diet and a great deal of



"I SANG TO THE CHILD THERE AND THEN."

eyes quite an intelligent look. The moment I left the platform this had passed, but when I came on again in the second part of the programme exactly the same state of things was repeated until, incredible as it may seem, his mother conceived the idea that my voice had an actual power over his mind. Was it not possible, she suggested, that if this power were exercised at frequent intervals it might act as a kind of mental medicine and help to give him reason?

I sang to the child there and then, and was so astonished to observe the change in his expression that, although I had never heard of any similar case, I arranged to sing to him once a week for several weeks, in order to see what the result might be, should there be any.

At the end of four weeks I was obliged to leave London for a period, and I heard nothing more till about six months later, when the child's mother called on me one day to express her deep thanks for my exercise and open air for him, with the result that his brain seemed to develop marvellously.

For my part, I am quite sure that both the diet and the exercise were ordered to assist the rapid growth of the child, and that it was that growth which released from its imprisonment some portion of the brain which had been tightly confined from birth. His mother, however, would not allow herself to be convinced that it was anything but my voice which had led to her child's wonderful cure.

Unfortunately, she told the facts of the case to a number of people, and on many different occasions I have since had letters from relations of idiots asking me to sing in private to the afflicted ones! Needless to say, I am obliged to refuse in all these cases, for one thing because if I acceded to them I should not be able to call a moment of the day my own, and for another lest I should destroy the prestige of my first cure.

THE BLACKWATER POT.

By Charles G. D. Roberts.

THE lesson of fear was one which Henderson learned late. He learned it well, however, when the time came. And it was Blackwater Pot that taught him.

Sluggishly, reluctantly, impotently, the spruce logs followed one another round and round the circuit of the great stone pot. The circling water within the great pot was smooth and deep and black, but streaked with foam. At one side a deep rent in the rocky rim opened upon the sluicing current of the river, which rushed on, quivering and seething, to plunge with a roar into the terrific cauldron of the falls. Out of that thunderous cauldron, filled with huge tramplings and the shriek of tortured torrents, rose a white curtain of spray, which every now and then swayed upward and drenched the green birches which grew about the rim of the pot. For the break in the rim, which caught at the passing current and sucked it into the slow swirls of Blackwater Pot, was not a dozen feet from the lip of the falls.

Henderson sat at the foot of a ragged white birch which leaned from the upper rim of the pot. He held his pipe unlighted, while he watched the logs with a half fascinated stare. Outside, in the river, he saw them in a clumsy panic haste, wallowing down the white rapids to their awful plunge. When a log came down clear along shore its fate hung for a second or two in doubt. It might shoot straight on, over the lip, into the wavering curtain of spray and vanish into the horror of the cauldron. Or, at the last moment, the eddy might reach out stealthily and drag it into the sullen wheeling procession within the pot. All that it gained here, however, was a terrible kind of respite, a breathing-space of agonized suspense. As it circled around, and came again to the opening by which it had entered, it might continue on another eventless revolution, or it might, according to the whim of the eddy, be cast forth once more, irretrievably, into the clutch of the awful sluice. Sometimes two logs, after a pause in what seemed like a secret death-struggle, would crowd each other out and go over the falls together. And sometimes, on the other hand, all would make the circuit safely again and again. But always, at the cleft in the rim of the pot, there was the moment of suspense, the shuddering, terrible panic.

It was this recurring moment that seemed to fasten itself balefully upon Henderson's imagination, so that he forgot to smoke. He had looked into the Blackwater before, but never when there were any logs in the pot. Moreover, on this particular morning, he was overwrought with weariness. For a little short of three days he had been at the utmost tension of body, brain, and nerve, in hot but wary pursuit of a desperado whom it was his duty, as deputy-sheriff of his county, to capture and bring to justice.

This outlaw, a French half-breed, known through the length and breadth of the wild backwoods county as "Red Pichot," was the last but one—and accounted the most dangerous—of a band which Henderson had undertaken to break up. Henderson had been deputy for two years, and owed his appointment primarily to his pre-eminent fitness for this very task. Unacquainted with fear, he was at the same time unrivalled through the backwoods counties for his subtle woodcraft, his sleepless endurance, and cunning.

It was two years now since he had set his hand to the business. One of the gang had been hanged. Two were in the penitentiary, on life sentence. Henderson had justified his appointment to everyone except himself. But while Pichot and his gross-witted tool, "Bug" Mitchell, went unhanged, Henderson felt himself on probation, if not shamed. Mitchell he despised. But Pichot, the brains of the gang, he honoured with a personal hatred that held a streak of rivalry. For Pichot, though a beast for cruelty and treachery, and with the murder of a woman on his black record—which placed him, according to Henderson's ideas, in a different category from a mere killer of men—was at the same time a born leader and of a courage none could question. Some chance dash of Scotch Highland blood in his mixed veins had set a mop of hot red hair above his black, implacable eyes and cruel, dark face. It had touched his villainies, too, with an imagination which made them the more atrocious. And Henderson's hate for him as a man was mixed with respect for the adversary worthy of his powers.

Reaching the falls, Henderson had been

forced to acknowledge that, once again, Pichot had outwitted him on the trail. Satisfied that his quarry was by this time far out of reach among the tangled ravines on the other side of Two Mountains, he dismissed the two tired river-men who constituted his posse, bidding them go on down the river to Greensville and wait for him. It was his plan to hunt alone for a couple of days in the hope of catching his adversary off guard. He had an ally, unsuspected and invaluable, in a long-legged, half-wild youngster of a girl, who lived alone with her father in a clearing about a mile below the falls, and regarded Henderson with a child-like hero-worship. This shy little savage, whom all the settlement knew as "Baisley's Sis," had an intuitive knowledge of the wilderness and the trails which rivalled even Henderson's accomplished woodcraft; and the indomitable deputy "set great store," as he would have put it, by her friendship. He would go down presently to the clearing and ask some questions of the child. But first he wanted to do a bit of thinking. To think the better, the better to collect his tired and scattered wits, he had stood his Winchester carefully upright between two spruce saplings, filled his pipe, lighted it with relish, and seated himself under the old birch where he could look straight down upon the wheeling logs in Blackwater Pot.

It was while he was looking down into the terrible eddy that his efforts to think failed him and his pipe went out, and his interest in the fortunes of the captive logs gradually took the hold of a nightmare upon his overwrought imagination. One after one he would mark, snatched in by the capricious eddy and held back a little while from its doom. One after one he would see crowded out again, by inexplicable whim, and hurled on into the raging horror of the falls. He fell to personifying this captive log or that, endowing it with sentience, and imagining its emotions each time it circled shuddering past the cleft in the rim, once more precariously reprieved.

At last, either because he was more deeply exhausted than he knew, or because he had fairly dropped asleep with his eyes open and his fantastic imaginings slipped into a veritable dream, he felt himself suddenly become identified with one of the logs. It was one which was just drawing around to the fateful cleft. Would it win past once more? No; it was too far out! It felt the grasp of the outward suction, soft and insidious at first, then resistless as the falling of a mountain. With straining nerves and pounding heart Henderson strove to hold it back by sheer will and the wrestling of his eyes. But it was no use. Slowly the head of the log turned outward from its circling fellows, quivered for a moment in the cleft, then shot smoothly forth into the sluice. With a groan Henderson came to his senses, starting up and catching instinctively at the butt of the heavy Colt in his belt. At the same instant the coil of a rope settled over his shoulders, pinioning his arms to his sides, and he was jerked backwards with a violence that fairly lifted him over the projecting root of the birch. As he fell his head struck a stump; and he knew nothing more.

When Henderson came to his senses he found himself in a most bewildering position. He was lying face downward along a log, his mouth pressed upon the rough bark. His arms and legs were in the water, on either side of the log. Other logs moved past him sluggishly. For a moment he thought

"HE WAS LOOKING DOWN INTO THE TERRIBLE EDDY."

himself still in the grip of his nightmare, and he struggled to wake himself. The struggle revealed to him that he was bound fast upon the log. At this his wits cleared up, with a pang that was more near despair than anything he had ever known. Then his nerve steadied itself back into its wonted control.

He realized what had befallen him. His enemies had back-trailed him and caught him off his guard. He was just where, in his awful dream, he had imagined himself as being. He was bound to one of the logs down in the great stone pot of Blackwater Eddy.

For a second or two the blood in his veins ran ice, as he braced himself to feel the log lurch out into the sluice and plunge into the trampling of the abyss. Then he observed that the other logs were overtaking and passing him. His log, indeed, was not moving at all. Evidently, then, it was being held by someone. He tried to look around, but found himself so fettered that he could only lift his face a few inches from the log. This enabled him to see the whole surface of the eddy and the fateful cleft, and out across the raving torrents into the white curtain that swayed above the cauldron. But he could not, with the utmost twisting and stretching of his neck, see more than a couple of feet up the smooth stone sides of the pot.

As he strained on his bonds he heard a harsh chuckle behind him; and the log, suddenly loosed with a jerk which showed him it had been held by a pike-pole, began to move. A moment later the sharp, steel-armed end of the pike-pole came down smartly on the forward end of the log, within a dozen inches of Henderson's head, biting a secure hold. The log again came to a stop. Slowly, under pressure from the other end of the pike-pole, it rolled outward, submerging Henderson's right shoulder, and turning his face till he could see all the way up the sides of the pot.

"ABOVE THE WATER WAS RED PICHOT, HOLDING THE PIKE-POLE AND SMILING DOWN UPON HIM SMOOTHLY."

What he saw, on a ledge about three feet above the water, was Red Pichot, holding the pike-pole and smiling down upon him smoothly. On the rim above squatted Bug Mitchell, scowling, and gripping his knife as if he thirsted to settle up all scores on the instant. Imagination was lacking in Mitchell's make-up; and he was impatient—so far as he dared to be—of Pichot's fantastic procrastinatings.

When Henderson's eyes met the evil, smiling glance of his enemy they were

steady and cold as steel. To Henderson, who had always, in every situation, felt himself master, there remained now no mastery but that of his own will, his own spirit. In his estimation there could be no death so dreadful but that to let his spirit cower before his adversary would be tenfold worse. Helpless though he was, in a position that was ignominiously and grotesquely horrible, and with the imminence of an appalling doom close before his eyes, his nerve never failed him. With cool contempt and defiance he met Red Pichot's smile.

"I've always had an idee," said the half-breed, presently, in a smooth voice that penetrated the mighty vibrations of the falls, "ez how a chap on a log could paddle roun' this yere eddy fer a deuce of a while afore he'd hev to git sucked out into the sluice!"

As a theory this was undoubtedly interesting. But Henderson made no answer.

"I've held that idee," continued Pichot, after a civil pause, "though I hain't never yet found a man, nor a woman nuther, as was willin' to give it a fair trial. "But I feel sure ye're the man to oblige me. I've left yer arms kinder free, leastways from the elbows down, an' yer legs also, more or less, so's ye'll be able to paddle easy-like. The walls of the pot's all worn so smooth, below high-water mark, there's nothin' to ketch on to, so there'll be nothin' to take off yer attention. I'm hopin' ye'll give the matter a right fair trial. But ef ye gits tired an' feels like givin' up, why, don't consider my feelin's. There's the falls awaitin'. An' I ain't agoin' to bear no grudge ef ye don't quite come up to my expectations of you."

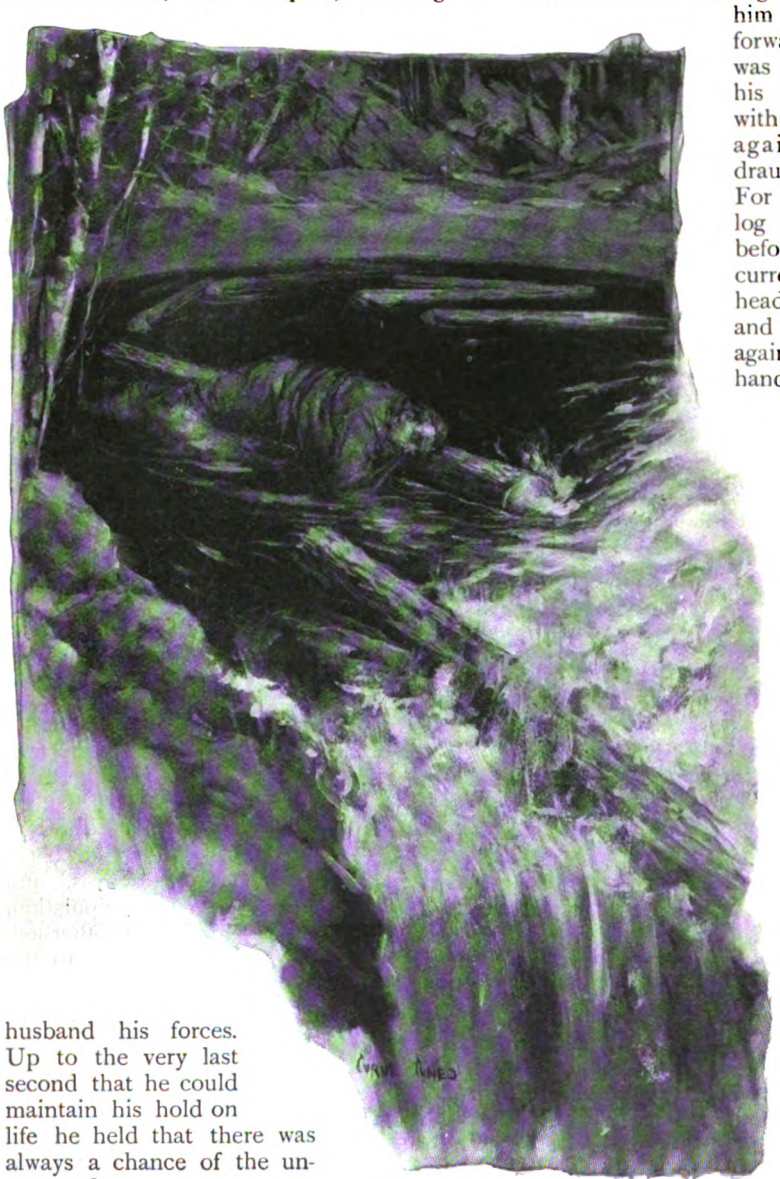
As Pichot ceased his measured harangue he jerked his pike-pole loose. Instantly the log began to forge forward, joining the reluctant procession. For a few moments Henderson felt like shutting his eyes and his teeth and letting himself go on with all speed to the inevitable doom. Then, with scorn of the weak impulse, he changed his mind. To the last gasp he would maintain his hold on life, and give fortune a chance to save him. When he could no longer resist, then it would be fate's responsibility, not his. The better to fight the awful fight that was before him, he put clear out of his mind the picture of Red Pichot and Mitchell perched on the brink above, smoking, and grinning down upon the writhings of their victim. In a moment, as his log drew near the cleft, he had forgotten them. There was room now in all his faculties for but one impulse, one consideration.

The log to which he was bound was on the extreme outer edge of the procession, and Henderson realized that there was every probability of its being at once crowded out the moment it came to the exit. With a desperate effort he succeeded in catching the log nearest to him, pushing it ahead, and at last, just as they came opposite the cleft, steering his own log into its place. The next second it shot quivering out into the sluice; and Henderson, with a sudden cold sweat jumping out all over him, circled slowly past the awful cleft. A shout of ironical congratulation came to him from the watchers on the brink above. But he hardly heard it, and heeded it not at all. He was striving frantically, paddling forward with one hand and backward with the other, to steer his sluggish, deep-floating log from the outer to the inner circle. He had already observed that to be on the outer edge would mean instant doom for him, because the outward suction was stronger underneath than on the surface, and his weighted log caught its force before the others did. His arms were so bound that only from the elbows down could he move them freely. He did, however, by a struggle which left him gasping, succeed in working in behind another log—just in time to see that log, too, sucked out into the abyss, and himself once more on the deadly outer flank of the circling procession.

This time Henderson did not know whether the watchers on the brink laughed or not as he won past the cleft. He was scheming desperately to devise some less exhausting tactics. Steadily and rhythmically, but with his utmost force, he back-paddled with both hands and feet, till the progress of his log was almost stopped. Then he succeeded in catching yet another log as it passed and manœuvring in behind it. By this time he was half-way around the pot again. Yet again, by his desperate back-paddling, he checked his progress, and presently, by most cunning manipulation, managed to edge in behind yet another log, so that when he again came round to the cleft there were two logs between him and doom. The outermost of these, however, was dragged instantly forth into the fury of the sluice, thrust forward, as it was, by the grip of the suction upon Henderson's own deep log. Feeling himself on the point of utter exhaustion, he nevertheless continued back-paddling and steering and working inward, till he had succeeded in getting three files of

logs between himself and the outer edge. Then, almost blind and with the blood roaring so loud in his ears that he could hardly hear the trampling of the falls, he hung on his log, praying that strength might flow back speedily into his veins and nerves.

Not till he had twice more made the circuit of the pot, and twice more seen a log sucked out from his very elbow to leap into the white horror of the abyss, did Henderson stir. The brief stillness, controlled by his will, had rested him for the moment. He was cool now, keen to plan, cunning to husband his forces. Up to the very last second that he could maintain his hold on life he held that there was always a chance of the unexpected.



"HIS LOG MOVED PAST THE GATE OF DEATH."

With now just one log remaining between himself and death, he let himself go past the cleft, and saw that one log go out. Then, being close to the wall of the pot, he tried to delay his progress by clutching at the stone with his left hand and by dragging upon it with his foot. But the stone surface was worn so smooth by the age-long polishing of the eddy that these efforts availed him little. Before he realized it he was almost round again, and only by the most desperate struggle did he succeed in saving himself. There was no other log near by this time for him to seize and thrust forward in his place. It was simply a question of his restricted paddling, with hands and feet, against the outward draught of the current. For nearly a minute the log hung in doubt just before the opening, the current sucking at its head to turn it outward, and Henderson paddling against it not only with hands and feet, but with every ounce of will and nerve that his body contained. At last, inch by inch, he conquered. His log moved past the gate of death; and dimly, again, that ironical voice came down to him, piercing the roar.

Once past, Henderson fell to back paddling again — not so violently now — till other logs came by within his reach and he could work himself into temporary safety behind them. He was soon forced to the conviction that if he strove at just a shade under his utmost he was able to hold his own and keep one log

always between himself and the opening. But what was now his utmost, he realized, would very soon be far beyond his powers. Well, there was nothing to do but to keep on trying. Around and around, and again and again around the terrible smooth, deliberate circuit he went, sparing himself every ounce of effort that he could, and always shutting his eyes as the log beside him plunged out into the sluice. Gradually, then, he felt himself becoming stupefied by the ceaselessly-recurring horror, with the prolonged suspense between. He must sting himself back to the full possession of his faculties by another burst of fierce effort. Fiercely he caught at log after log, without a let-up, till, luck having favoured him for once, he found himself on the inner instead of the outer edge of the procession. Then an idea flashed into his fast-clouding brain, and he cursed himself for not having thought of it before. At the very centre of the eddy, of course, there must be a sort of core of stillness. By a vehement struggle he attained it and avoided crossing it. Working gently and warily he kept the log right across the axis of the eddy, where huddled a crowd of chips and sticks. Here the log turned slowly, very slowly, on its own centre; and for a few seconds of exquisite relief Henderson let himself sink into a sort of lethargy. He was roused by a sudden shot, and the spat of a heavy bullet into the log about three inches before his head. Even through the shaking thunder of the cataract he thought he recognised the voice of his own heavy Colt; and the idea of that tried weapon being turned against himself filled him with childish rage. Without lifting his head he lay and cursed, grinding his teeth impotently. A few seconds later came another shot, and this time the ball went into the log just before his right arm. Then he understood, and woke up. Pichot was a dead shot. This was his intimation that Henderson must get out into the procession again. At the centre of the eddy he was not sufficiently entertaining to his executioners. The idea of being shot in the head had not greatly disturbed him—he had felt as if it would be rather restful, on the whole. But the thought of getting a bullet in his arm, which would merely disable him and deliver him over helpless to the outdraught, shook him with something near a panic. He fell to paddling with all his remaining strength, and drove his log once more into the horrible circuit. The commendatory remarks with which Pichot greeted this move went past his ears unheard.

Up to this time there had been a strong sun shining down into the pot, and the trees about its rim had stood unstirred by any wind. Now, however, a sudden darkness settled over everything, and sharp, fitful gusts drew in through the cleft, helping to push the logs back. Henderson was by this time so near fainting from exhaustion that his wits were losing their clearness. Only his horror of the fatal exit, the raving sluice, the swaying white spray-curtain, retained its keenness. As to all else he was growing so confused that he hardly realized the way those great indrawing gusts, laden with spray, were helping him. He was paddling and steering and manœuvring for the inner circuit almost mechanically now. When suddenly the blackness about him was lit with a blue glare, and the thunder crashed over the echoing pot with an explosion that outroared the falls, he hardly noted it. When the skies seemed to open, letting down the rain in torrents, with a wind that almost blew it level, it made no difference to him. He went on paddling dully, indifferent to the bumping of the logs against his shoulders.

But to this fierce storm, which almost bent double the trees around the rim of the pot, Red Pichot and Mitchell were by no means so indifferent. About sixty or seventy yards below the falls they had a snug retreat which was also an outlook. It was a cabin built in a recess of the wall of the gorge, and to be reached only by a narrow pathway easy of defence. When the storm broke in its fury Pichot sprang to his feet.

"Let's git back to the Hole," he cried to his companion, knocking the fire out of his pipe. "We kin watch just as well from there, an' see the beauty come over when his time comes."

Pichot led the way off through the straining and hissing trees, and Mitchell followed, growling but obedient. And Henderson, faint upon his log in the raving tumult, knew nothing of their going.

They had not been gone more than two minutes when a drenched little dark face, with black hair plastered over it in wisps, peered out from among the lashing birches and gazed down anxiously into the pot. At the sight of Henderson on his log, lying quite close to the edge, and far back from the dreadful cleft, the terror in the wild eyes gave way to inexpressible relief. The face drew back; and an instant later a bare-legged child appeared, carrying the pike-pole which Pichot had tossed into the bushes. Heedless of the sheeting volleys of the rain and the

"PICHOT LED THE WAY OFF THROUGH THE STRAINING AND HISSING TREES."

fierce gusts which whipped her dripping homespun petticoat about her knees, she clambered skilfully down the rock wall to the ledge whereon Pichot had stood. Bracing herself carefully, she reached out with the pike-pole, which, child though she was, she evidently knew how to use.

Henderson was just beginning to recover from his daze, and to notice the madness of the storm, when he felt something strike sharply on the log behind him. He knew it was the impact of a pike-pole, and he wondered, with a kind of scornful disgust, what Pichot could be wanting of him now. He felt the log being dragged backwards, then held close against the smooth wall of the pot. A moment more and his bonds were being cut—but laboriously, as if with a small knife and by weak hands. Then he caught sight of the hands, which were little and brown and rough, and realized, with a great burst of wonder and tenderness, that old Baisley's "Sis," by some miracle of miracles, had come to his rescue. In a few seconds the ropes fell apart, and he lifted himself, to see the child stooping down with anxious adoration in her eyes.

"Sis!" he cried. "You!"

"Oh, Mr. Henderson, come quick!" she panted. "They may git back any minnit." And, clutching him by the shoulder, she tried to pull him up by main strength. But Henderson needed no urging. Life, with the return of hope, had surged back into nerve and muscle; and in hardly more time than it takes to tell the two had clambered side by side to the rim of the pot and darted into the covert of the tossing trees.

No sooner were they in hiding than Henderson remembered his rifle and slipped back to get it. His enemies had not discovered it. It had fallen into the moss, but the well-oiled, perfect-fitting chamber had kept its cartridges dry. With that weapon in his hands Henderson felt himself once more master of the situation. Weariness and apprehension together slipped from him, and one purpose took complete possession of him. He would settle with Red Pichot right there, on the spot where he had been taught the terrible lesson of fear. He felt that he could not really feel himself a man again unless he could settle the whole score before the sun of that day should set.

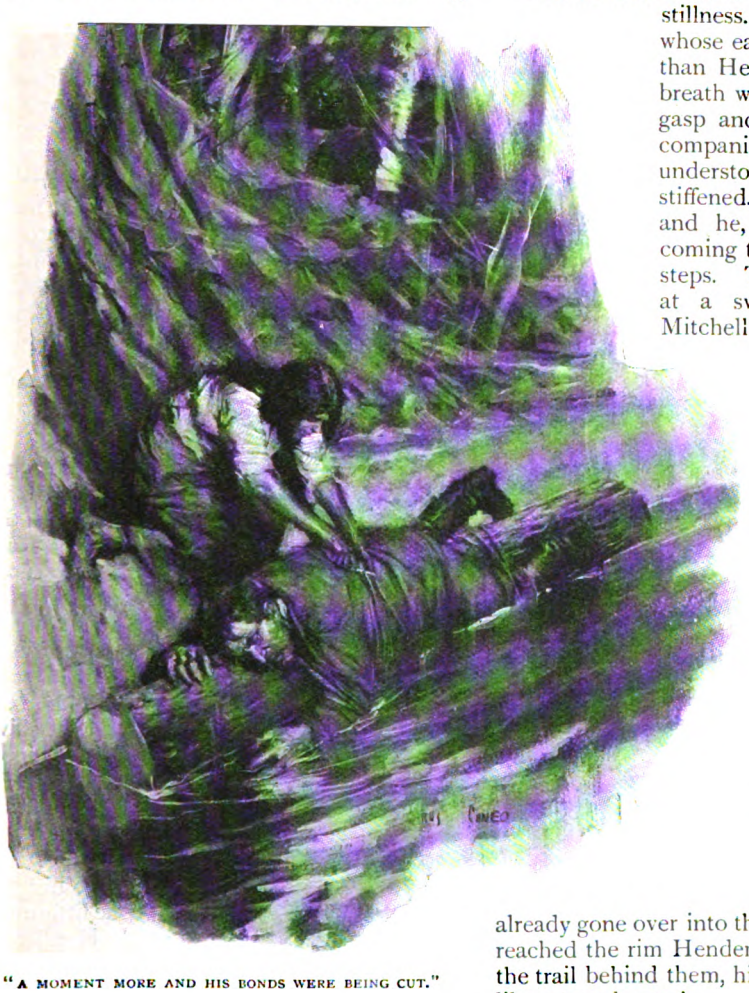
The rain and wind were diminishing now; the lightning was a mere shuddering gleam over the hill-tops beyond the river; and the thunder no longer made itself heard above the trampling of the falls. Henderson's plans were soon laid. Then he turned to Sis, who stood silent and motionless close at his side, her big, alert, shy eyes watching like a hunted deer's the trail by which Red Pichot might return. She was trembling in her heart at every moment that Henderson lingered within that zone of peril. But she would not presume to suggest any more.

Suddenly Henderson turned to her and laid an arm about her little shoulders.

"You saved my life, kid!" he said, softly. "How ever did you know I was down there in that hell?"

"I jest *knowed* it was you, when I seen Red Pichot an' Bug Mitchell a-trackin' someone," answered the child, still keeping her

eyes on the trail, as if it was her part to see that Henderson was not again taken unawares. "I *knowed* it was you, Mister Henderson, an' I followed 'em ; an' oh, I seen it all, I seen it all, an' I most died because I hadn't no gun. But I'd 'ave killed 'em both, some day,



"A MOMENT MORE AND HIS BONDS WERE BEING CUT."

sure, ef—ef they hadn't went away! But they'll be back now right quick."

Henderson bent and kissed her wet black head, saying, "Bless you, kid! You an' me'll always be pals, I reckon!"

At the kiss the child's face flushed, and, for one second forgetting to watch the trail, she lifted glowing eyes to his. But he was already looking away.

"Come on," he muttered. "This ain't no place for you an' me *yet*."

Making a careful circuit through the thick undergrowth, swiftly but silently as two wild-cats, the strange pair gained a dense covert close beside the trail by which Pichot and Mitchell would return to the rim of the pot. Safely ambuscaded, Henderson laid a hand firmly on the child's arm, resting it there for two or three seconds, as a sign of silence.

Minute after minute went by in the intense stillness. At last the child, whose ears were even keener than Henderson's, caught her breath with a little indrawing gasp and looked up at her companion's face. Henderson understood ; and every muscle stiffened. A moment later and he, too, heard the on-coming tread of hurried foot-steps. Then Pichot went by at a swinging stride, with Mitchell skulking obediently at his heels.

Henderson half raised his rifle, and his face turned grey and cold like steel. But it was no part of his plan to shoot even Red Pichot in the back. From the manner of the two ruffians it was plain that they had no suspi-cion of the turn which affairs had taken. To them it was as sure as two and two make four that Hender-son was still on his log in the pot, if he had not already gone over into the cauldron. As they reached the rim Henderson stepped out into the trail behind them, his gun balanced ready like a trapshooter's.

As Pichot, on the very brink, looked down into the pot and saw that his victim was no longer there he turned to Mitchell with a smile of mingled triumph and disappointment.

But, on the instant, the smile froze on his face. It was as if he had felt the cold, grey gaze of Henderson on the back of his neck. Some warning, certainly, was flashed to that mysterious sixth sense which the people of the wild, man or beast, seem some-times to be endowed with. He wheeled like lightning, his revolver seeming to leap up from his belt with the same motion. But in the same fraction of a second that his eyes

met Henderson's they met the white flame-spurt of Henderson's rifle—and then, the dark.

As Pichot's body collapsed it toppled over the rim into Blackwater Pot and fell across two moving logs. Mitchell had thrown up his hands straight above his head when Pichot fell, knowing instantly that that was his only hope of escaping the same fate as his leader's.

One look at Henderson's face, however, satisfied him that he was not going to be dealt with on the spot, and he set his thick jaw stolidly. Then his eyes wandered down into the pot, following the leader whom, in his way, he had loved if ever he had loved anyone or anything. Fascinated, his stare followed the two logs as they journeyed around, with Pichot's limp form, face upward, sprawled across them They reached the cleft, turned, and shot forth into the raving of the sluice, and a groan of horror burst from "Bug's" lips. By this Henderson knew what had happened, and, to his immeasurable self-scorn, a qualm of remembered fear caught sickeningly at his heart. But nothing of this betrayed itself in his face or voice.

"Come on, Mitchell!" he said, briskly. "I'm in a hurry. You jest step along in front, an' see ye keep both hands well up over yer head, or ye'll be savin' the county the cost o' yer rope. Step out, now."

He stood aside, with Sis at his elbow, to make room. As Mitchell passed, his hands held high, a mad light flamed up into his sullen eyes, and he was on the point of springing, like a wolf, at his captor's throat. But Henderson's look was cool and steady, and his gun held low. The impulse flickered out in the brute's dull veins. But as he glanced at Sis he suddenly understood that it was she who had brought all this to pass. His black face snarled upon her like a wolf's at bay, with an inarticulate curse more horrible than any words could make it. With a shiver the child slipped behind Henderson's back and hid her face.

"MITCHELL HAD THROWN UP HIS HANDS STRAIGHT ABOVE HIS HEAD WHEN PICHOT FELL."

"Don't be skeered o' him, kid, not one little mite," said Henderson, gently. "He ain't agoin' to trouble this earth no more. An' I'm goin' to get yer father a job, helpin' me, down somewheres near Greensville—because I couldn't sleep nights knowin' ye was runnin' round anywheres near that hell-hole yonder!"

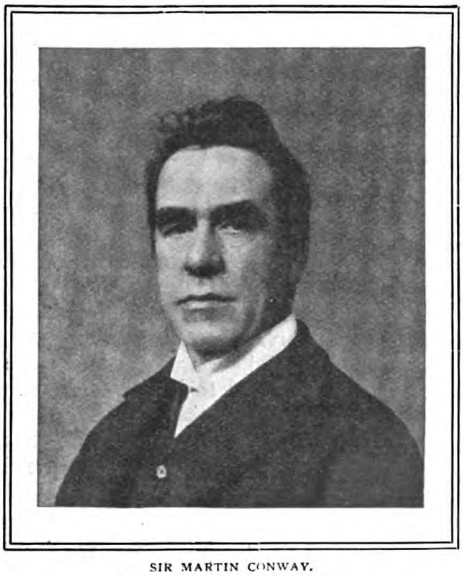
THE ROMANCE OF MOUNTAINEERING.

By SIR MARTIN CONWAY.

WHAT is the romance of mountaineering? I am almost inclined to answer, "It is all romance." Certainly nothing could less resemble the ordinary world of every day than do the experiences and incidents of even the tamest scramble in the regions of everlasting snow. It is there, however, to my now old-fashioned way of thinking, we must go. A fig for your gully-scrambling on the wrong sides of grass hills! No doubt it is very good exercise, and you can break your neck, but it happens in the world we know, where men can build houses and grow potatoes. The world of snow you can only visit; that is its great joy. It is not a home for man, but a place essentially hostile to him, into and through which he must fight his way. All undeveloped peoples living amongst or near the regions of eternal snow conceive them to be the home of fairies or devils, or the spirits of the dead. In Switzerland they thought so till the other day. You may still see the little chapel built at the foot of the Matterhorn a few centuries ago to dam back the fiends from the valley, and I have myself known a guide who used to see spirits on that mountain every time he climbed it.

It is the same in the Himalayas. The clouds rising off the peaks are the smoke of the fairies' kitchen. There are fabulous crystal houses on the peaks. It is the same in the Andes of America and the African Mountains of the Moon.

These tales naïvely express the feeling of romance which hangs about the great unvisited mountains. We all experience it, and that is what inevitably draws us on to penetrate the strange world of ice. Sometimes in mountain regions there are legends of some native of ancient days who ventured into the high world and saw the gods. I heard such tales in the Karakorums of Central Asia. Men there had been, they told us, who had gone aloft among the great peaks, but either they did not return or they came back mad. The fairies had possessed them, and would also possess us if we ventured into their domain.



SIR MARTIN CONWAY.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

An almost exactly similar story was told me in Bolivia about the great peak Illimani, which I was about to climb. A native, it was said, once set forth many generations ago to climb that peak, where, as was well known, the gods dwelt. He was watched scrambling up the lower rocks. He disappeared round a corner. Several hours later, towards sunset, he was seen against the sky on the very summit of one of the

highest buttresses. They never beheld him again. The gods took him. A few days after hearing this tale I climbed the mountain. On the descent I rested, still at an altitude of about twenty thousand feet, on the very spot where the native had last been beheld, according to the story. I had forgotten all about him, but a curious circumstance brought him very vividly before my mind. As I was seated on the rocks, my hand beside me touched something cold and soft and clammy, not at all the kind of thing one touches on the top of a snow mountain. I was startled, and looked to see what the substance might be. It was a bit of goat-hair rope, such as

"I WAS STARTLED, AND LOOKED TO SEE WHAT THE SUBSTANCE MIGHT BE."

the natives of those parts have used from the most ancient days, but swollen by long exposure, within the niche of rock in which it lay, till it had grown to be as thick as my wrist. Clearly some native had once been on this very spot, as tradition asserted. The descent from this point is dangerous, and there can be little doubt that he was killed in attempting it. Verily the gods took him, as they have taken so many more in all parts of the mountain world.

It is not given to modern travellers to see fairies, not even on the rose-tinted mountain-peaks when the dawn or the sunset kisses them into flame. But the sense of romance in the world of ice is not diminished because it comes to us moderns in another form and is expressed by us in other metaphors. We may account for sunset tints on the snow from well-known optical causes. We explain the form of glaciers by the understood laws of their motion. We may even explain the forms and character of the mountains themselves in the most satisfactory scientific manner. It remains none the less true that the most callous of us, in the presence of the astounding phenomena of the world of ice, experience emotions of a remarkable character. They inspire us with awe. They impress the imagination of all men somewhat as all men are impressed in the presence of death. All that we see, like death itself, may be the outcome of a series of processes entirely understood, and yet that outcome transcends all the processes and reasoned causes, and in its splendid and overwhelming reality reaches past all the entrenchments of our logic and our science and strikes home to the mysterious heart of man and thrills us with strange wonder. The mountains, after all that science has discovered about them, seem more divine than ever. They bring to the most agnostical messages not written in words and that cannot be repeated by one to another. They draw out of us a strange longing for we know not what. Some of us

think it is to climb them, and to go on climbing them; yet when we are at the summit the mystery is not there, and when we are back at the base it is not there either. When we behold them from the plain like the white walls of Heaven shining on the far horizon against the sky, they call to us to come within their sacred enclosure and learn wondrous things. When we enter their gates the mystery has flown aloft. When we are on the top it has sunk into their valleys or lies upon the vast extending plain from which we came. That, after all, is the very essence of romance. Romance is always somewhere else; never in the life that we lead, but in that we imagine or read about. There is romance on the sea for the landsman, romance in the mine for the townsman, romance in the town for the countryman, romance in high life for the plodder, romance in low life for the rich. All romance—shall we not say it?—is in the heart of man. It is not really outside at all, but, like the Kingdom of God, is within us if it exists for us at all. That is romantic for any man which kindles the imagination within him, as his machinery hindered the imagination of McAndrew. It is because the mountains so affect most men that they are to be called romantic. Those of us who go to them to find that golden treasure which they seem to possess, find it, if we find it at all, within the hearts that we carry with us.

"NO CHASM YAWNS SO IMPRESSIVELY AS DOES A GREAT CREVASSE THAT YOU ARE CROSSING ON A SLENDER SNOW-BRIDGE THAT MAY GIVE WAY AT ANY MOMENT."

Every climber who reads these words will know what I mean, for we climbers understand one another, though it is a rare thing on a mountain-side for us of the English persuasion to "pan out" on such matters. We talk of the thing to be done and keep our emotions to ourselves, but we know that they exist in all of us none the less. Few would be the climbers if it were not so. The excitement of scrambling, especially if there be danger present, danger of an obvious character which it takes the skill of a whole united party to avoid—such excitement is very stimulating to all the emotional part of a man's nature. At those moments the outside world of rock and ice becomes glorified even to the most callous. What is then seen is beheld under a strange illumination, and photographs itself upon the memory with peculiar vividness. Nothing ever seems so big as a slope down which a threatening avalanche may presently hurl you. No rocks are so grim as those that are pelting you with falling stones. No chasm yawns so impressively as does a great crevasse that you are crossing on a slender snow-bridge that may give way at any moment. If these things are impressive in fine, sunshiny hours, what shall we say of the same places in times of storm? It is then, indeed, that the

"THE CLIMBER HAS TO FIND HIS WAY, CRAWLING ALONG LEDGES OR THREADING THE MAZE OF CREVASSES."

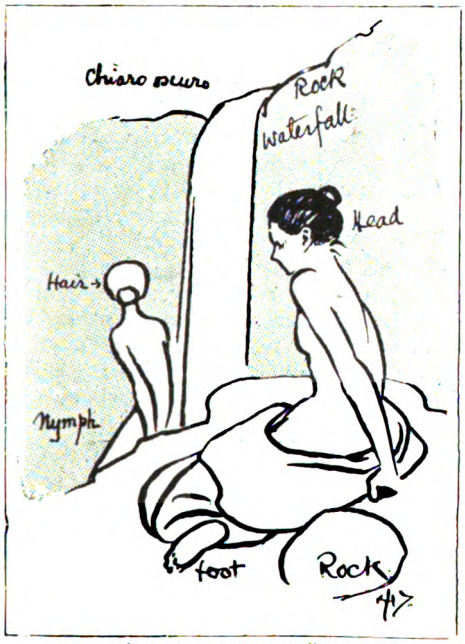
romance of the mountains is most splendid. Who does not know the romantic character of any thunderstorm? But when the blackness of it swallows up the great mountains; when the cliffs and the pinnacles vanish in the dense mist and the snow envelops the climber; when his ice-axe hisses with the electrical discharge and all Nature calls aloud round about, the wind raging, the snow sliding off shelf and slope, stones falling, and thunder crashing; when, amidst all this terrific turmoil of the elements, the climber has to find his way, crawling along ledges or threading the maze of crevasses, or cutting a frail staircase down a slope of ice, or, worse still, seeking for the one practicable spot where a route is possible down some precipitous cliff, when all the landmarks he has noted are disguised by the new-fallen snow and nothing is visible at more than a few yards' distance—then, indeed, the romantic terror of the mountains may make its appeal to the heart even of the boldest; and the brave man, though he will not fear, will do his work in an exaltation of mind that will be a joy to remember in all his after-years.

Such experiences are, of course, painful at the time, yet it is just those that the memory would least willingly part with. The serene days pass by and leave little mark on mind and character, but the days of storm and struggle mould a man's life alike in the artificial combats of sport and in the actual strife of living. Conquest over difficulty and danger is the greatest of all joys. A man does not need to be a mountain-climber to learn the lesson. It is the lesson of life.

CHRONICLES OF THE STRAND CLUB

"GENTLEMEN," said the Chairman, in his most impressive tones, "I give you the toast —the Royal Academy!"

Then it was, in the momentary silence between the shuffling of feet, the pushing back of chairs, and "the imbibition



HASSALL'S IDEA OF A TYPICAL "POYNTER."

of vitreous contents," as Emberton calls drinking the toast, that the most extraordinary incident occurred. The Oriental Prince—the distinguished guest of the Club—was heard to ask in a stage whisper, "What *is* the Royal Academy?" A shudder—half pity, half envy—ran round the board. Hassall, the Chairman, was equal to the occasion. He took a bold—but the wisest—course. "The Royal Academy, your Imperial Highness," he explained, in a loud voice, "is our great British trade union in Art. It consists of forty men, who are all prosperous and straightforward in their dealing. Whence arises the proverb, 'Fair, fat, and forty.' These forty, who for the most part paint pictures, are headed by an eminent painter named Poynter.

"The President," continued Hassall, "invariably goes to Greece for his theme. His subjects are chiefly ladies attired in a manner suitable to a warm climate. Having chosen an appropriate title, he makes a preliminary study, something in this fashion. This represents the figures and their classical attitudes. When the picture is finished he affixes his trade-mark, and the article is then ready for the patron. After the President there are other famous poynters—painters, I should say. There is Sargent. Perhaps Mr. T. Velazquez Browne will illuminate

TOM BROWNE'S IMPRESSION OF THE STYLE OF MR. J. SARGENT, R.A.

your Imperial Highness on the merits of this celebrated artist." (Great cheering and cries of "Tom Browne for ever!")

Tom Browne: I fear I must disclaim the high-sounding patronymic with which the

"AN EVENING AT TADEMA VILLA," BY C. HARRISON.

Chairman has invested me. It is true that a kinship—at least on this occasion—exists between the immortal Spaniard and myself and my brother painter, Jack Sar—I should say, Mr. Sargent. On this account I am most happy to give a bird's-eye view, as it were, of Mr. Sargent's achievements; also his manner of work. First select two or three Oriental or aristocratic models; mix equal parts of *espièglerie* and *diablerie*, ivory black and yellow ochre. Distribute the former to your sitters something like this: put the latter on your palette, and then proceed, without any previous drawing and by mere force of genius alone, to slash it on to the canvas. The result is in every case a masterpiece. All Sargent's portraits are masterpieces.

"I had no idea anything could be so simple," observed the Prince.

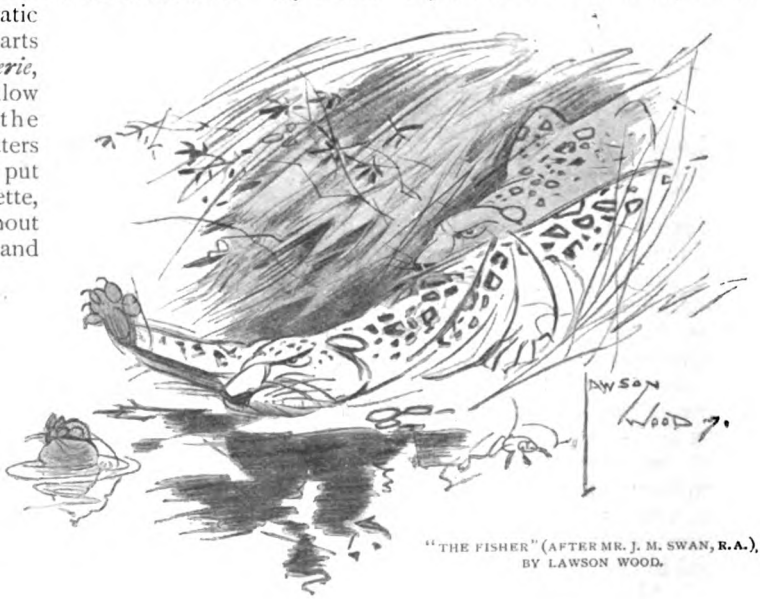
"We now," interpolated the Chairman, "come to Alma-Tadema, coupled with an exposition by C. Vandyke Harrison."

Harrison (who was received with tumultuous cheering): I will gladly Bovrilize Tadema for your Imperial Highness. Please observe the texture of the marble. Also the expression of Lucianus as he hearkens to the lyre of Hebe. No pains have been spared about the archæology. Look at the carving of the couch-leg.

Hassall: Will Lawson Wood elucidate Swan or Leader?

The Prince: Ah! I have heard of Leda and the Swan. A very pretty story.

Wood: Not the same, your Imperial Highness. Swan's speciality is Bengal bears and Polar tigers. Or is it Bengal tigers and Polar bears? I forget. He spends his time half at Jamrach's—half at the Zoo. The other day someone asked him if he had never had an adventure with a wild animal. "Yes," said Swan, "once. I was sketching in masterly fashion at the Zoo, when I felt a fearful blow from behind. My neck was seized and a claw fastened itself into my beard. My blood ran cold in my veins.



"THE FISHER" (AFTER MR. J. M. SWAN, R.A.), BY LAWSON WOOD.

Powerful as I am, I had difficulty in freeing myself from my fierce assailant. A tussle ensued, but at last I tore the creature off and it took to the fields." "Excuse me, Swan," said his friend, "but you have forgotten to mention what the animal was. Was it a bear or a tiger?" "Not at all—not at all," said Swan; "it was an unhappy member of the Newlyn School, who said I had 'skied' his masterpiece. Now you know, dear boy, I wasn't even on the Hanging Committee."

HASSALL'S IDEA OF A "MARCUS STONE" PICTURE.

Emberton: Marcus Stone is one of our most popular Academicians. Hassall may like to elucidate him afterwards, but I think I should like to cast the first Stone myself. Stone, you know, began as an historical painter. Little as you would think it now, his strong point is character. Certain faces fascinate him. Some years ago he had a commission to do a "Marcus Stone" picture. You know the sort of thing I mean—a girl on the lawn. I forget whether it was "Lovers" or "Parted" or "The First Quarrel" or "The Honeymoon." He was anxious to finish the picture by a certain date, but one morning his fair model failed to put in an appearance. Just as he was losing patience there came a rap at the studio door, and a raw-boned youth, whose face would have dislocated the machinery of a clock, entered. He wanted to know if Stone would like a model. "Not a male model," answered Stone, hardly glancing at the fellow. "But stay; I might as well finish painting the costume. If you like you can jump into these things for an hour or so, until my model turns up." The model seized the silken garments and withdrew, while Stone set his palette and arranged his canvas. When he got into the pose, the abnormal ugliness of the model fascinated him, and, hardly knowing what he was doing, he began to draw the fellow's face. He went on working steadily for three hours. There was this beautiful garden, the slender girl's figure, and dainty Georgian costumes surmounted by a face that would make the fortune of a music-hall low comedian. In the midst of it Luke Fildes came in. He nearly died with laughter at what he saw. Then his laughter suddenly ceased. "Look here," he said, "that is one of the finest character studies I ever saw. You

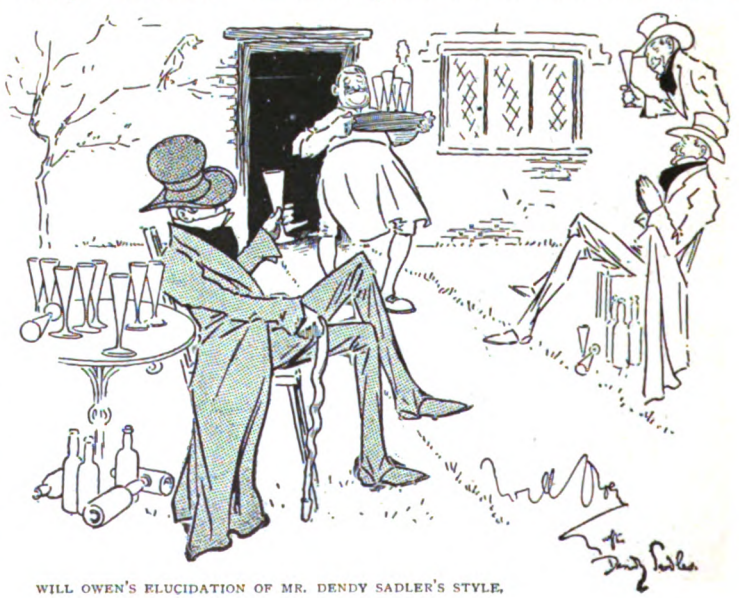
AN IMPRESSION OF THE WORK OF SIR LUKE FILDES, R.A., BY HARRY FURNISS.

"THE LAIRD O' THE GLEN" (AFTER MR. J. MACWHIRTER, R.A.), BY A. S. BOYD.

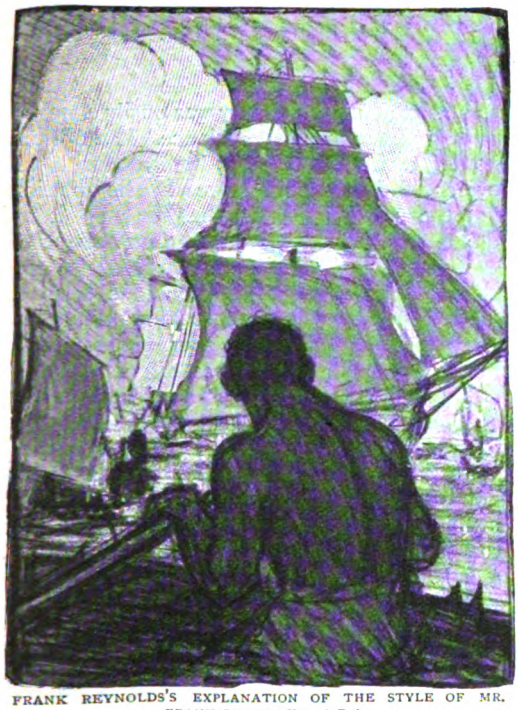
While Boyd, in response to a demand from the Chairman, proceeded to describe pictorially the qualities which distinguish the work of Mr. J. MacWhirter, R.A., Mullins related the following anecdote: The famous Scottish painter was once on a painting tour in the North. He had chosen a most picturesque glen, and was congratulating himself on his extraordinary good luck when he became conscious of an unwelcome figure in the foreground. The figure, which was hideously attired, belonged to a Scotch maiden, who was also the possessor of singularly plain features and a shock of carroty hair. MacWhirter stood it as long as he could, and then he asked the damsel if she would kindly cease to obstruct the landscape. What he actually said was, "Wull ye no gang awa'?" "Gang awa'!" shrilled the lady. "Hae I nae guid richt to be here the noo? I want to be pit in t' picture." "I'll see ye blethered first!" said the painter, wrathfully. "Then ye'll nae paint the glen," was the answer. At that moment a tall, gawky male appeared. "Faether," cried the girl, "here's a mon says I'm nae guid eneugh for his picture. I'm nae sonsie eneugh (pretty enough)." "Eh?" roared the father. "Jeannie, go call your sister." In two or three minutes another damsel appeared, tall, red-faced, raw-boned, and with a violent red nose. The owner of the landscape then delivered his ultimatum.

mustn't destroy it." Stone suddenly woke to a realization of what he had done. "But what can I do with it?" he asked. "Do with it? Why, paint out the costume, of course. Call it 'A Seedy Buccaneer Down on His Luck.' It'll create a great sensation." But Stone, I believe, did not take the proffered advice, and the picture was begun again.

Furniss: Speaking of Fildes, is it not odd to think that he, like Stone, began as an illustrator to Dickens, and now he is almost exclusively a fashionable portrait painter? If I were asked to give my general impression of Fildes's work, it would be something like this —— Here followed the sketch given on the previous page.



WILL OWEN'S ELUCIDATION OF MR. DENDY SADLER'S STYLE.



FRANK REYNOLDS'S EXPLANATION OF THE STYLE OF MR. FRANK BRANGWYN, A.R.A.

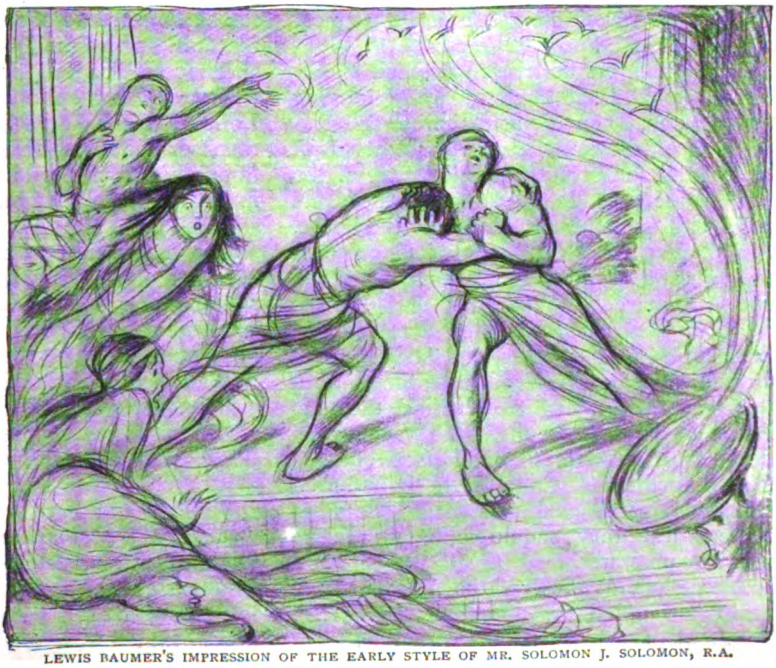
"Ye can tak your choice," he said. "Ye can pit my two dochters in t' picture, or ye can gang awa' oot of t' glen." As MacWhirter had put in two solid days painting and was enamoured of his subject, he thought fit to compromise. So he brought forth another canvas and painted the two Highland maidens separately, afterwards making a present of the picture to the offended monarch of the glen.

Bolman: Apropos of Will Owen's vivid illustration of Dendy Sadler's style, I should like to interject a little story of the painter himself. A few years ago he engaged lodgings for a fortnight in a charming Devonshire village. He was very much struck by the appearance of the place, and especially the old-fashioned furniture and fittings. Much to his surprise and disgust, when he got to his lodgings a week later he found the old oak settles, chairs, and tables replaced by red plush, up-to-date Curtain Road furniture, the old prints were down and the grandfather's clock had been taken away. He summoned his landlord. "Look here," he said, "what does this mean?" The man smiled complacently. "Ah, Mr. Sadler," he said, "we knew it would please you, sir. The moment we heard Mr. Dendy Sadler was a-comin' down here for a rest, my wife and I, we bundled all that old stuff out o' the house. We knew that what you wanted most was a rest from that kind o' thing, sir!"

Frank Reynolds gave an elucidation of the methods of Frank Brangwyn, A.R.A., saying: "Brangwyn's creed may be summed up in Paint, more Paint, still more Paint. His specialities are bent backs and brigantines, and he revels in an Oriental opulence of colour."

Hassall: Will Baumer kindly illustrate that rising light in Israel, Solomon J. Solomon, of whom it can no longer be said that, "in all his glory, he is not R.A.'d like one of these"?

That Baumer executed his task with taste and judgment, let the annexed drawing testify. And so, with the remark from the Prince that he would carry back to the Far East a very comprehensive knowledge of the British Royal Academy, the proceedings terminated.



LEWIS BAUMER'S IMPRESSION OF THE EARLY STYLE OF MR. SOLOMON J. SOLOMON, R.A.

NINEPINS.

By E. White.

"THAT'S a marianthus."

Marley Rye put up his glasses, and discovered a gorgeous specimen of an amaranthus. A broad smile spread over his face as he looked at the bright-eyed girl who flitted like a golden butterfly from flower to flower, pointing out their beauties and enhancing their reputations, as she murdered their good names. A scarlet screen of exotics threw up her white dress in bold relief, and Rye reflected that there were worse things in life than being piloted through acres of glass-houses crammed full of choice blooms by the daughter of the house, especially when that daughter happened to be Bobbie.

Marley was also having a second treat, for in his capacity of a classic swell who, according to rumour, spouted Greek in his cradle, he was deriving an immense amount of secret mirth from the ingenuity with which the girl managed to mangle the most straightforward name.

"Whoever taught you these long words?" he asked, as Bobbie untwisted her mouth after an extra effort.

"Steggins, our head gardener. An awfully clever man. He knows all the names, and he taught me. It's difficult, but, you see, I try."

"I'm sure you do. You are the most trying person I know."

But Bobbie did not rise to the bait.

"Oh, look!" she cried. "They're trying the new cob. Come outside quickly!"

As Rye followed the girl from the moist heat of the conservatory into the glare of the sun he reflected on the strangeness of Fate which had made him an inmate of the house. For, though the Flower family had come to the district seven months previously, they had not yet "arrived." When they settled in the neighbourhood they took the finest seat in the county, as a tangible proof of the large fortune which was believed to be theirs. But they left their family tree behind them in Australia, and the county, who vaguely believed that the ancestors of all people hailing from that particular Colony were drafted from Botany Bay, delayed calling on the newcomers lest they should entertain future convicts unawares.

Altogether, at present, the Flowers were having an uphill time, for they were rich, hospitable, and wanted to be friendly. For some time past the county was busily engaged in weighing them in the balance. Most of the bolder members wished to fraternize with the owner of the best preserves in the district, but the conservative families were upset by the news that the Colonials drank tea with every meal. The family consisted of the elder Flower, who was a hatchet-faced, spare man, whose character was striking enough to rise superior to his social slips, and to stamp him a personality. He was respected generally; but then the Flower son, in his crude savagery, was almost impossible, and the Flower nephew — Mole — quite impossible. With Mrs. Flower the neighbourhood was not concerned, for, though keenly interested in fur and feather, the only thing with wings that came outside their province was an angel, and Mrs. Flower had been dead fifteen years.

Bobbie was the hardest nut to crack. Young, beautiful, and domineering, she became instantly the prettiest girl in the county and the most unpopular. After she shocked the most select circle that ever owed a washing bill to a steam laundry, by an unguarded reference to having washed her own blouses, those same garments lacked the starch of the social manner, where she was concerned. Marley Rye had met her out with the harriers on one of the rare occasions when he came down from his beloved Cambridge, and had spent whole days with the beautiful Australian in sprinting across country. Bobbie's beauty appealed to him first, and then her pluck, her breeziness, and unconventionality, and if she showed rather more leg in negotiating a hedge than the average girl, she also gave him glimpses of a thoroughly strong, true nature. So, to his great surprise, Rye left off hunting the hare and took to running after Bobbie, with the result that he received an invitation to the Flower domains for a week-end.

"That cob is a devil," remarked Bobbie, airily, as they approached a grass plot where a group of men gathered round a restless horse, with a beautiful coat and a wicked eye.

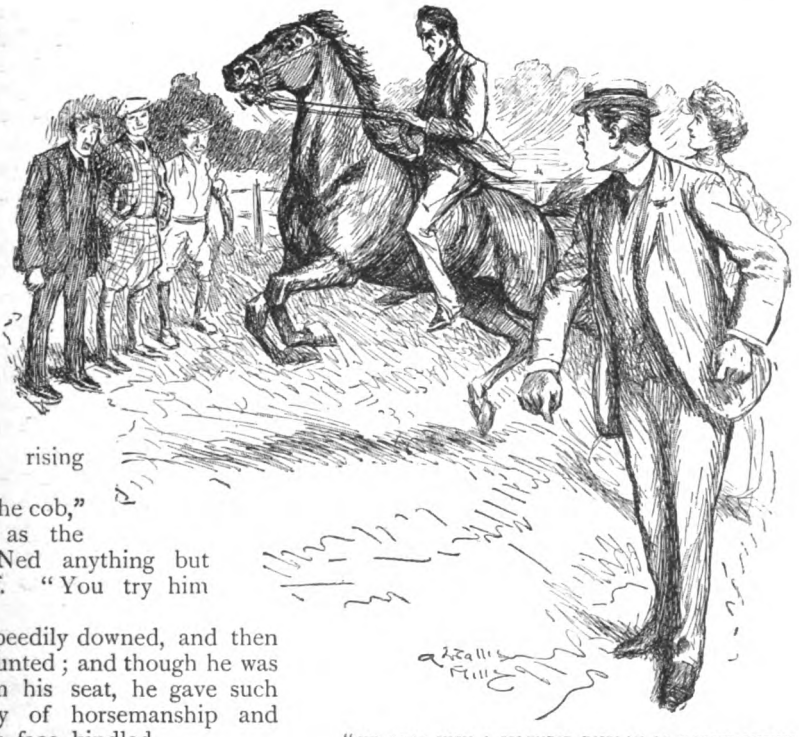
"Here, you two, come along and see some sport," called out the elder Flower, joyfully. "This is like old times."

The stable-boy, who was nearly lifted off his feet with every movement of the horse's head, grinned with anticipation as the Flower

son elbowed him out of the way and started to mount the cob. A scene of mad excitement followed. The horse reared up in every direction, bucking and kicking furiously, while gravel flew up in white showers, and the family dodged the flying hoofs with wild glee — Bobbie's delighted scream rising above the rest.

"First blood to the cob," observed Flower, as the horse deposited Ned anything but gently on the turf. "You try him next, Dick!"

But Mole was speedily downed, and then Flower himself mounted; and though he was finally ejected from his seat, he gave such a splendid display of horsemanship and strength that Rye's face kindled.



"HE GAVE SUCH A SPLENDID DISPLAY OF HORSEMANSHIP AND STRENGTH THAT RYE'S FACE KINDLED."

"Capital, capital!" he said to Bobbie; "your father's riding beats everything I've seen."

"Yes, doesn't it?" Bobbie's cheeks were flushed. "Your turn now," she added.

Rye's pleasure was suddenly diluted. "No, thank you," he said, hastily; "I wouldn't dream of mounting that brute! I'm not a don at riding, like you people."

He felt uncomfortable as he spoke, but he had no idea of the consternation that his answer was to produce.

"But you'll try it, of course?" said Flower, whose eyes were bulging with astonishment. "You won't give the horse best?"

"I should if I tried to mount him. It would be equivalent to asking one of you to smash my head in."

A silence followed, broken only by the snigger of the stable-boy. Then Flower grunted, "Well, I've *heerd* a lot about British pluck, but—h'm!"

"Get up, Bobbie," interposed Mole, "just to show Mr. Rye it's quite easy."

Rye bit his lip.

"It's not a question of pluck, but of common sense," he said, shortly.

"Nonsense! See here — I *dare* you to mount!" burst in Bobbie.

The group instantly made way, expecting to see Rye dash madly for the horse, but he only frowned.

"I'm afraid your 'dare' won't alter my decision. I'm not a fool."

"No. Something else, perhaps!"

The whole family, hot with indignation, turned and glared at Rye, who, cold with disgust, glowered back at them.

"Well, since I don't shine at this exhibition of skill, and I seem to be interfering with the enjoyment, I'll have a smoke," he said, at length.

"Don't smoke in the stables. Some of the horses are rather fresh."

It was Bobbie's voice, and Rye rose to the taunt.

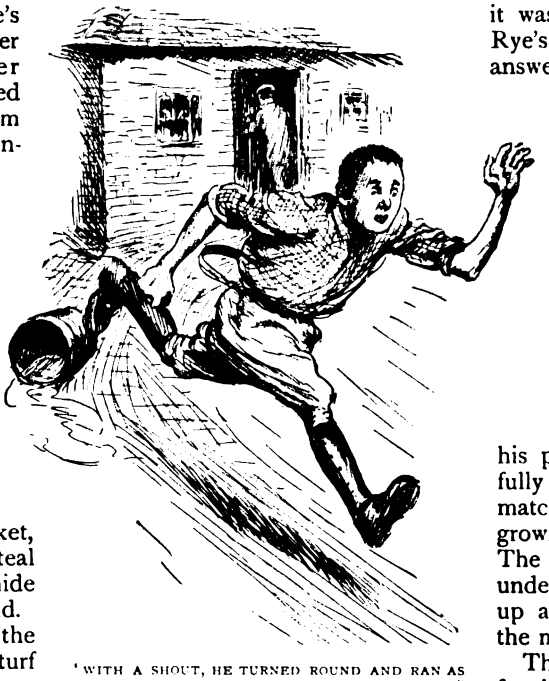
"Thanks, I'll take the risks, if any."

He turned on his heel, and a chorus of loud laughter followed him, which made the unaccustomed red rise to his sallow face. As he walked away his brain was in a whirl, as if a ruthless hand had suddenly made hay in his well-regulated and neatly-docketed mind. He felt like a king whose monarchy had been insulted, and, at the same time, like a small boy who had been whipped, and who wanted his mother. His sense of personal dignity had been badly hurt. Throughout his life he had been keenly conscious of

belonging to the superior section of Society, which is hall-marked by the capital letter. His family was prominent in the county; the family silver was nearly as ancient as the crest engraved thereon; while for the greater part their moral status dated back to a period of antiquity which is known as "the old Adam." In short, Rye was a somebody, and this somebody had been insulted by an Australian squatter. He here dug his heel into the fresh white gravel of the path, and his wound received its first drop of balm by the cut-up appearance of the Flower gravel. Then he remembered that he also belonged to the aristocracy of brains, as his career at Cambridge testified, and, smarting with the jeers of the illiterate Mole, he raised his stick and savagely cut off the head of a Flower geranium. Ardent botanist though he was, he viewed its fall with glee. Then flashed across his mind the memory of Bobbie's short, sweet face, her breeziness, and her whims. Sadly he picked up the Flower geranium and put it in his buttonhole. He could not include Bobbie in his black list. Bobbie was beautiful, Bobbie was rich; in the future Bobbie might possibly wear a coronet. And Bobbie despised him. Rye suddenly shrank to four feet odd again. He felt sure he was a small boy in an Eton jacket, and he wanted to steal away somewhere and hide his grief from the world.

He passed from the flowers and the turf through a little door, and found himself in another part of the gardens. Fruit trees sunned themselves on the mellowed, red-bricked walls; glass frames flashed in the sunshine. Past rows of pea sticks and acres of glass he walked, till trees gave way to sheds and cabbage-patches to outhouses. A long line of buildings lay to one side, and their shady aspect tempted Rye to leave the sun and the midday heat. He would smoke off his troubles in the stables.

He went up to the green-painted door and fumbled with the latch, but to his annoyance he found that the place was locked. Peering about with his short-sighted eyes he discovered a bunch of keys hanging on a nail by him, and as everyone seemed to have deserted for their noonday meal he laboriously tried key after key. His straw hat tilted forward as he bent down and knocked off his glasses, but he took no notice. At last the click of the lock rewarded him, and he pushed open the door. As he entered the stables a shock-headed youth came round the corner, carrying a bucket of water. His round eyes saw a slim man in a grey suit and a straw hat. Nothing more. Yet the bucket of water fell from his hand, and, with a shout, he turned round and ran as fast as his legs and wind would carry him in the opposite direction. It was an incident worthy of notice, but, as it was performed behind Rye's back, it did not answer its purpose of distraction.



"WITH A SHOUT, HE TURNED ROUND AND RAN AS FAST AS HIS LEGS AND WIND WOULD CARRY HIM."

The door fell to with a slam, and the outside world, with its vexation and humiliation, was shut securely out. The stables were delightfully cool and dark after the glare of the gardens, and Rye felt instinctively soothed. He lit his pipe, and, after carefully extinguishing the match, puffed away with growing contentment. The yellow straw rustled under his feet, as he paced up and down, reviewing the morning's incident.

The scene whirled before his eyes like the pieces of a kaleidoscope. The rearing horse dashed before him, with the ring of grinning faces dancing round. Bobbie's sweet face slid down from the sky, and the white of her dress cut into the circle. Blotches of shadow were succeeded by bars of yellow sun, and broad patches of colour were scattered everywhere. A wedge of blue, which was the sky, mingled with a slab of green, which was the turf, and over it all shot the hoofs and mane of the diabolical horse.

Rye groaned. He wondered where the wretched brute was stalled. There was no sign of him here—nothing but some quiet ponies covered with striped cloths.

He took another turn. His pipe went out, and as he sucked its cold stem he had a sudden foretaste of the future reft of Bobbie. It may have been the empty pipe, but somehow life was empty then. The classics appeared squeezed of their interest, and in comparison with Bobbie's vitality Virgil and Homer seemed to have been dead rather longer than usual.

Rye lit another match, and its flame revealed a new sight. One of the walls was pierced by a narrow window, through which the sun poured in a shaft of gold. Now this was obscured by dark masses. He felt for his glasses, but to his annoyance they were not in his pocket, and he remembered that he had left them lying outside the stables. He stamped his foot crossly, and it may even be surmised that he said a short and expressive word. But he had a right to be annoyed, for without his glasses he felt himself to be as helpless as a baby.

Again he strained his eyes towards the window, but was only rewarded by a blur. Yet he thought he could distinguish white patches that looked like faces, and something bright, suspiciously like Bobbie's hair. He stood for a minute in indecision, and then he approached the window. With every step the dimmed outlines grew sharper, and presently he saw that his conjecture had been correct. Four faces *were* staring at him through the cobwebby glass, and one was crowned with Bobbie's fair halo.

Rye turned on his heel savagely; this was playing the game too low. The Flower family seemed in ten minutes to have skipped a few centuries of time, and, not content with their first *rôle* of primeval savages, had introduced into their manner the customs of the Inquisition.

The thought of those watching eyes gloating over his discomfiture goaded Rye to fury. "*Cads!*" he ejaculated, in his rage. He crossed over to a dark corner where he would be out of their range of vision, and started to finish his pipe. A pony stamped restlessly about his box and came out of his stall. He passed close to Rye, and then scudded back as a low knocking commenced on the door.

Rye's teeth bit through his amber mouthpiece. "Hanged if I'll contribute to their humour any more," he muttered. His pipe was a thing of the past, and he had only a fervent desire to leave the stables. But he would not go through the door, where the hammering was growing more insistent every minute. He crossed to the other end of the stable. Here a heavily-bolted door barred his way, and he began to tackle the bolts in the hope that it might lead to an outlet. As he fought with the heavy bars the sound of the knocking increased in volume, but he took no heed. Furiously pressing down the rusty iron, he managed to force the door open. It was evident from the effort it involved that this means of communication was seldom used.

He found himself in a smallish stable strewn with straw. At one end was a sort of rough stair, leading to a loft, and moving up there, among the hay, he saw what appeared to be the uncouth figure of a stable-boy. The room was shady, but his short-sighted eyes, peering about, found what they were seeking. The door at the far end really looked as if it led out to the grounds, and he crossed over and rattled at it, but only to find to his disgust that it was locked on the outside.

"Hi!" he called to the boy, "can you open this door?"

The boy turned his head, but at that moment Rye's attention was attracted by the scurry of feet outside. The key turned in the lock, the door was flung open, and he stepped again into the sun to find himself confronted with the Flower family. Yet even as he passed the doorway and the door slammed he had a curious sensation. It seemed as if someone had just touched him with the tip of a very powerful finger, and, in spite of the heat, a cold jet suddenly spurted down his spine and his knee-joints suddenly gave way. Lost in his surprise at this unaccountable spasm of fear, he heard as in a dream, through the thick wood of the door, the sound of a muffled roar.

The faces round him were pale and perturbed, and Rye's brain began officiously to work on its own account. In spite of himself, a horrid suspicion persisted in knocking at his heart. Had he stumbled on a secret of the Flower family? That scream had a maniac tone in it. He shivered at the thought.

As he glared round at the circle of faces the elder Flower suddenly thrust out a hairy paw.

"Shake!" he said. "I don't go back on my word, but when I make a mistake I own up to it. I was mistaken just now. Shake!"

Rye shook, but frigidly. The next minute, the younger Flower and Mole started a course of pump-handling.

"We spoke too soon, I reckon. You Britishers are plucky enough, come to that, but, mebbe, the way's different."

"Yes, that's it. We sized you up wrong."

These overtures left

"'HI!' HE CALLED TO THE BOY, 'CAN YOU OPEN THIS DOOR?'"

Rye with an aching arm, bruised fingers, and a still stronger sense of mystification. There was something strange about the Flower cordiality, something he could not fathom. As they walked back to the house they all talked boisterously, with an effusive friendliness that was in marked contrast to their former coldness. Yet Rye kept intercepting furtive glances and questioning looks that were shot at his face. It was plain that he had tumbled on a hornet's nest of mystery, and no pleasant mystery either, as the inhuman howl testified.

When they reached the flower-garden, Bobbie, who had walked silently ahead, suddenly dismissed her male belongings with "Walk on, please! I want to speak to Mr. Rye alone."

The men grinned and obeyed. Rye waited in surprise at this fresh development. But Bobbie stood with her head bent, apparently occupied with scraping a hole in the gravel with the tip of a beaded slipper. When she at last spoke her remark was quite irrelevant.

"Isn't that a lovely aster?"

Rye stared hard at the flower, and answered with growing surprise, "Yes. Very early for them, though," he amended.

"Come along." Bobbie dragged him on impetuously. She took his arm, and he now saw that her cheeks were pale and streaky and her jauntiness had given way to an unfamiliar misery.

"Why, what's wrong, Bobbie?" he asked.

"I've been crying," was the direct answer.

"Why, what about?"

"You."

"*Me?* But why—why?"

All her caprice seemed to have been driven out of Bobbie.

"Oh," she answered, "because we riled you so, and I *do* like you—better—better than I've ever liked anyone before."

She stopped, and though Rye completed her sentence it must be admitted that it was Bobbie who practically proposed.

Rye walked back to lunch with Bobbie nestling on his arm, rapture and astonishment striving for mastery. This had indeed been a morning of surprises. As they reached the dining-room the girl hung back.

"I've something of yours," she said—"your glasses."

She perched them on her nose and squinted alarmingly at him. Then she slipped them in his pocket and gave him a gentle push.

"Now, just go straight in and ask dad."

Rye hesitated. In spite of his surprising conquest of the beautiful heiress; whom he had that morning in fancy bestowed as an ornament to the peerage of England, he felt doubtful of his reception.

"I think I'll wait until after lunch. He doesn't care much about me, I'm afraid."

"No; you ask him now before lunch.

He'll enjoy it all the more. Dad thinks all the world of you."

Apparently Bobbie was right, for the elder Flower beamed upon him, after he had sorted out Rye's tangled tale, and at once, and with no reservations, Rye was accepted into the bosom of the family. The younger Flower, and Mole also, vied with each other in expressing their delight.

But it was all too sudden and too effusive. Rye spent a blissful afternoon with Bobbie under the chestnut tree on the lawn, but somehow, underneath all his rapture, lay the uneasy feeling that he was being bribed. Through the murmur of the bees, and the hum of the wind through the trees, before the crimson of the roses, and even between Bobbie's kisses, came the faint echo of that maniac roar.

At four o'clock they were disturbed by the family, a visitor, and tea. The family gathered round a solid table, set in the shade of the chestnut, and prepared to attack the mounds of raspberries and cream with the appetites of schoolboys. But their hospitality disconcerted their visitor, a thin-lipped, hard-faced man, who was the owner of the adjoining seat.

"Only a cup of tea, nothing else," he protested. "I've very little time, and I was hoping that you would take me round your place. I've heard so much of your grounds, and the collection."

"Why, yes! Come along, all of you!" The elder Flower jumped up gleefully. To do the honours of his gardens appealed to him even more than the solid delights of tea. The others dutifully followed in a string, waiting meekly while Flower dilated over some particular beauty of horticulture, and the Hon. Bill Groves pursed his thin lips, admired, and envied.

Presently they threaded their way towards the scene of the morning's adventure, and Rye's heart beat faster as the familiar long building came in sight.

"So you've heard of this already?" remarked Flower. "Come to the window and look in. It's not safe to go inside; but have a squint. Of course, the place isn't properly built yet, and this is only a makeshift. Did you ever see finer brutes?"

For the second time that day four heads were pressed to the window. Flower grinned at Rye and closed one eye.

"*You* don't want to see them," he said, jovially. "Seen 'em at closer quarters, haven't you?"

But, with his glasses now perched securely on his nose, Rye was seeing them for the first time. His heart gave a violent leap. Instead of the quiet ponies in their striped cloths, here were several fine specimens of an animal that is noted for its ferocity and strength—whose kick and bite could have speedily reduced him to the state of an inoffensive doormat for their vicious hoofs.

"Fine zebras!" remarked Flower. "Unruly beasts! I've a gorilla in the next place," he continued. "Come and have a look through the window. We'll soon have him properly fixed up."

Rye staggered up behind the others. He was actually rather a nervous man, and these revelations made him feel physically ill. With startled eyes peering through the dim glass, he saw squatting in the shadow the enormous figure of a gigantic ape. The nut-like eye, the powerful jaws, and the width of the chest all appalled him. The brute slowly shook his shaggy head from side to side, and mouthed gravely to itself in absurd parody of a man, but when he saw the people at the window he made a bound towards them and gripped the bars with his huge arms, grinning with rage.

Flower grinned back with pride. "Soon make mincemeat of anyone, wouldn't he? Now I must tell you a little yarn. This chap here, Rye—he's to be my son-in-law, and proud I am of it, too—well, we sort of ragged him this morning, because he warn't set on trying one of our horses. We said p'r'aps more'n we meant, and he just set out to show us that a Britisher don't know the white feather. Now, what d'you think he did? Why, man, it was *grand!* Just went and smoked his pipe among those zebras. There's nerve! But, mind, it was going too far. We tried to make him budge. But this puss of mine had dared him, so what d'you think he did next? Why, left his card with the gorilla. Mind, that was chunk-headed folly, but it was grand all the same. Near shave he had, too. Yappo all but grabbed him. But, for all cool nerve, it licks creation. For quite ten minutes he held his life in his hand, and, so far as I could see, his pipe never went out. How's that for a *man?*"

They all turned and looked in reverential admiration at the *man*, who, from his abject appearance at that moment, looked incapable of offering fight to a mouse.

"Now come and see the antelopes," urged Flower.

Rye, muttering an excuse, turned abruptly on his heel and left them. He walked in a dream, till he came to a shady part of the

"THEY ALL TURNED AND LOOKED IN REVERENTIAL ADMIRATION AT THE 'MAN.'"

lawn, where a plaster Pan played to a clipped yew. Then he took out his pipe, and smoked and thought. He told his pipe a good many things as he watched the blue rings curl upwards. He explained that everyone on the earth was a toy that Fate played with—that free will was nothing, and that Fate was everything. That Fate stuck them all up for a gigantic game of ninepins, and that Fate threw the ball. He had had some close shaves that day, but he wasn't bowled. Let things stay as they were! It was all *Fate!*

But his pipe only said one thing, and that thing was, "Be a *man*." The shadows were falling when Bobbie came round the corner and found him there. His face was pale and his eyes heavy, for the history of his first smoke had been repeated, and his pipe had beaten him.

"Bobbie," he said, abruptly, "you know I care for you more than anything in the world, so perhaps you'll understand a little—just a very little—of how hard it is to say what I'm going to. It is this: I am not brave. I am a coward. I never knew that your father had a collection of wild animals. I walked in there by accident, and I couldn't see them without my glasses. But I've been frightened ever since. So—it's all over."

"Indeed, indeed, it's *not!*" Bobbie's hug was a very fair imitation of the gorilla's grip. "Dear, I knew all the time. I found your glasses outside, and I tested you the first thing. You blind old bat, you called a geranium an aster! But when I saw you in that dreadful place I *knew* I loved you then, all the way through."

"Love a coward?"

"You're *not.* We were wrong. You would have been mad to mount that horse And you've proved you're brave. The others would never have dared to own up they were funks. I guess there are two sorts of bravery."

"Well, I'm glad you don't give me up," said Rye. "But I'm afraid the others will."

"They won't. Only I'll tell them myself. And you are *never* to mention this again. Promise!"

Rye promised; and apparently the Flower family accepted Bobbie's view, for their son-in-law always remained their hero.

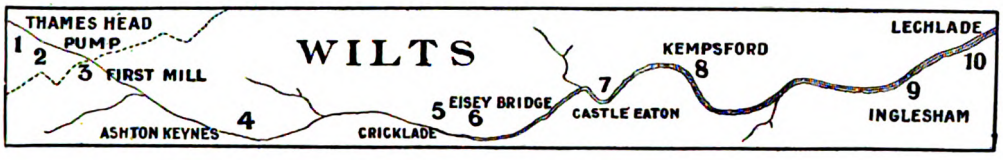
Yet, if the truth were known, perhaps Bobbie's version of the story was incomplete. But, whatever she said, she sealed the lips of her hearers, and the great "dare" incident was never openly mentioned. The fortunes of the game left Rye standing, even if it was Bobbie's hand that jogged Fate's elbow, so that the dread ball slid harmlessly past the ninepin.

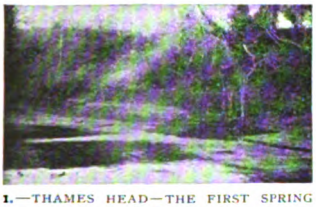
OUR "100-PICTURE" GALLERY.

Every article in this series contains at least a hundred pictures.

No. IX.—THE THAMES FROM SOURCE TO MOUTH.

The Photographs in this article were taken by Henry W. Taunt, Oxford.





1.—THAMES HEAD—THE FIRST SPRING AT TREWSBURY MEAD.

2.—THAMES HEAD PUMP.

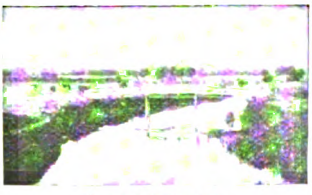
3.—FIRST MILL ON THAMES.

4.—RAGMAN'S LANE, ASHTON KEYNES.

5.—HATCHETT'S PLANK BRIDGE, CRICKLADE.

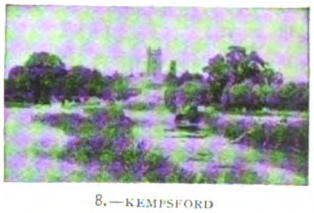
WHAT more delightful trip could be devised during the summer months than a minute exploration of England's greatest river? Beyond a somewhat hazy notion that it rises "somewhere in the Cotswolds," few people are really aware of the exact locality where the first, the initial, drop of Thames water bubbles out of Mother Earth. But this ignorance is to a certain extent excusable, as even the greatest authorities differ on this point. A great many contend that the Churn is the real Thames, and that the picturesque Seven Springs near Cheltenham, whence this river receives its genesis, is the actual source. Official geographers, on the other hand, point to Thames Head as its true birthplace.

Let us then bow to the mandate of authority, and set out to find the official cradle of the Thames. Three miles from Cirencester (correct pronunciation Sissesster) we cross a bridge over the Thames and Severn Canal, and when we inquire the name of the locality we are told it is Thames Head, and that the bridge is Thames Head Bridge. At the old toll-gate house we are directed to a spot half a mile along the banks of the canal, thence over a wall into the grounds of Trewsbury Manor. An intelligent canal-man is toiling close



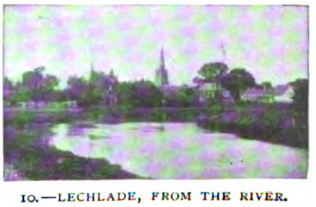
6.—EISEY BRIDGE.

7.—CASTLE EATON OLD BRIDGE.

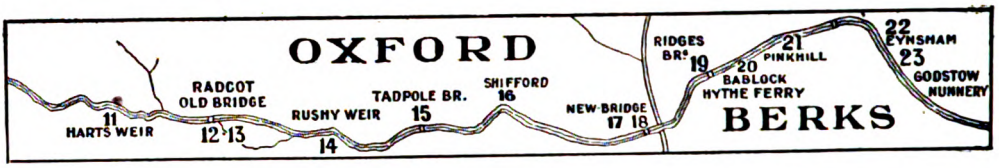


8.—KEMPSFORD

9.—INGLESHAM ROUND HOUSE.



10.—LECHLADE, FROM THE RIVER.



11.—HART'S WEIR.

17.—NEW BRIDGE.

12.—RADCOT OLD BRIDGE.

18.—THE WINDRUSH AT NEW BRIDGE.

13.—RADCOT SIDE STREAM.

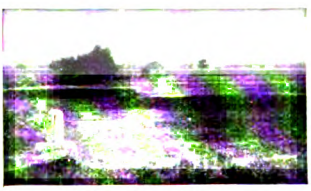
19.—RIDGE'S BRIDGE.

14.—RUSHY WEIR.

20.—BABLOCK HYTHE FERRY.

15.—TADPOLE BRIDGE.

21.—PINKHILL LOCK.



16.—SHIFFORD.

22.—EYNSHAM BRIDGE.

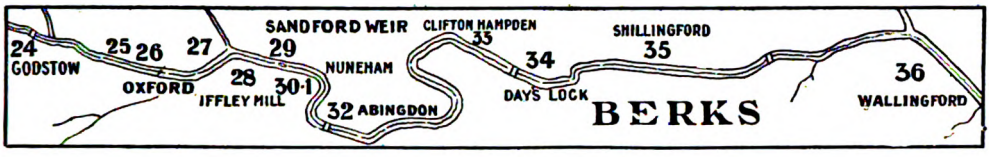
23.—GODSTOW NUNNERY.

at hand, and he undertakes to point out the spring from which, officially, the waters of the mighty river take their rise. At the base of a lofty ash tree in a rather dense glade a heap of white flat stones greets the eye. Just in front of these stones there is a tiny water-bed worn in the soft green turf. Some enterprising visitor has obviously intended to carve the word "Thames" in the bark of the ash tree, but he never got any farther than the first two letters. Perhaps he was dispirited at the thought of attempting to rob Seven Springs of its ancient honour. It is certain that the place lacks the charm and the peculiar interest of the cloistered spot in the Cotswold Hills. It certainly lacks the grace and significance of the Latin inscription :—

HIC TUUS—O TAMESINE PATER
—SEPTEMGEMINUS FONS

("Here, O Father Thames, thou hast thy sevenfold birth") with which Seven Springs is adorned. There are several such springs hereabouts, and, with a single exception, they are all as dry as a bone in midsummer.

But this is caused by the Thames Head Pump, which pumps daily thousands and thousands of gallons of water from these springs into the Thames and Severn Canal.



At Rendlesham the rivulet, although scarcely six feet wide, boldly essays its infant strength, and the first mill on the Thames is here situate. The river begins to assume a navigable appearance at Cricklade, where the Churn and the Thames unite, while at Castle Eaton, a little village in Wiltshire, it increases considerably both in width and in volume. Kempsford, the site of an old weir, is chiefly remarkable for its church, which possesses many features of architectural interest. Inglesham Round House marks the junction of the Thames with the Thames and Severn Canal, while at Lechlade, a short distance farther down, the river first becomes navigable for practical purposes.

Radcot Old Bridge, an interesting thirteenth-century erection, has been the scene of more than one battle, and the island between the bridges was strongly fortified during the Civil War. At Tadpole Bridge the river becomes very narrow, with many aggravatingly sharp turns, but the country through which it meanders is exceedingly pretty. Shifford is a very ancient town, and was the meeting-place of the Witan in the reign of King Alfred the Great, while New Bridge is by no means so recent an erection as its name would

24.—THE TROUT HOTEL, GODSTOW.

25.—OXFORD—RIVER AND BOATS FROM FOLLY BRIDGE.

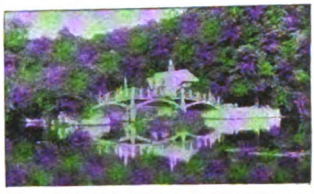
26.—OXFORD—MAGD. COLL. AND BRIDGE.

27.—AN EIGHT-OARED RACE AT THE BARGES, OXFORD.

28.—IFFLEY MILL.

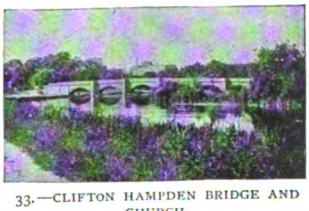
29.—SANDFORD WEIR.

30.—NUNEHAM BRIDGE.

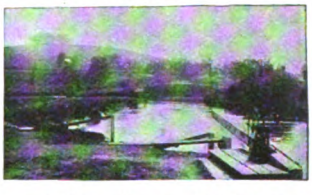


31.—NUNEHAM BRIDGE AND COTTAGES.

32.—ABINGDON.



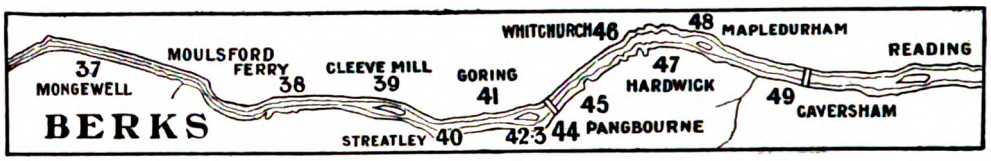
33.—CLIFTON HAMPDEN BRIDGE AND CHURCH.



34.—SINODUN HILL, FROM DAY'S LOCK.

35.—SHILLINGFORD BRIDGE.

36.—WALLINGFORD BRIDGE AND ST. PETER'S SPIRE.



37.—MONGEWELL CHURCH.

38.—MOULSFORD FERRY AND INN.

39.—CLEEVE OLD MILL.

40.—STREATLEY.

41.—GORING CHURCH.

42.—VIEW FROM STREATLEY HILL.

imply. It was built by Sir John Golofre of Tyfield in the fourteenth century. A mile farther on we come to Ridge's Bridge, the site of a former weir, while at Bablock Hythe Ferry the scenery becomes really very fine. There is an excellent stream of water hereabouts, but it turns and twists to an amazing extent before we arrive at Pinkhill Lock, where there is a drop of three feet. Eynsham Bridge is about a mile and a half farther on, and passing through here, with the ruins of old Godstow Nunnery on our right, we come at length to the historic town of Oxford. Hitherto we have been navigating the "river of quiet"; now we embark upon the "stream of pleasure."

Our first object of interest after leaving the old University town is Iffley Mill, which dates from 1279, and is, perhaps, the prettiest of its kind on the river. We then come to Sandford Weir. The pools in the vicinity are very dangerous for bathing purposes, and the obelisk we see on the bank is in memory of some unfortunates who have been drowned here. We now pass Nuneham, the seat of the Harcourt family, and come to Abingdon, a picturesque country town situated in the midst of very flat country. The reaches near Clifton

43.—VIEW FROM HARTS WOOD HILL.

44.—THE RIVER FROM SHOOTER'S HILL, PANGBOURNE.

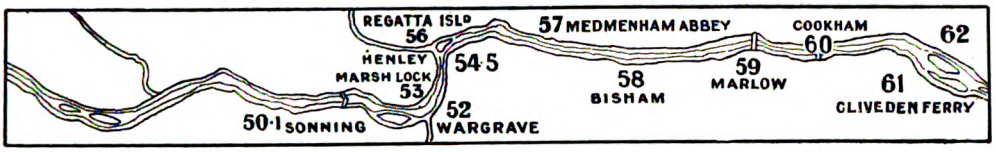
45.—PANGBOURNE WHARF AND WHITCHURCH OLD BRIDGE.

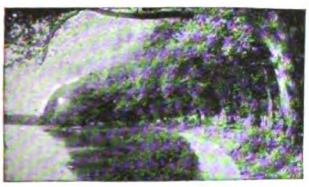
46.—WHITCHURCH.

47.—HARDWICK HOUSE.

48.—MAPLEDURHAM LOCK AND WEIR.

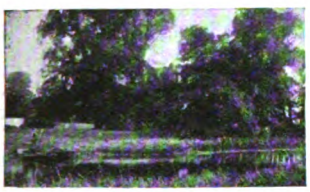
49.—CAVERSHAM EEL-BUCKETS AND CHURCH.





50.—SONNING—THAMES PARADE.

51.—SONNING LOCK.



52.—WARGRAVE CHURCH.

53.—AT MARSH LOCK.

54.—HENLEY BRIDGE, ANGEL HOTEL, AND CHURCH.

55.—HENLEY BRIDGE AND RED LION HOTEL.

Hampden are closed by luxuriant trees and backed by the soft outlines of distant hills. Sinodun Hill, near Day's Lock, is a fine Roman camp. Three miles farther on is Shillingford Bridge, and from here we proceed to Wallingford, nearly twenty-one miles from Oxford, and a very convenient place to break a journey.

At Mongewell may be seen an interesting old church, dating from Norman times. The Beetle and Wedge Inn and ferry at Moulsford now come into view. Near here the Oxford trial eights are annually rowed. Situated on a backwater near Cleeve Lock is a picturesque old mill, and from here we may obtain a lovely view of the hills and woods above Streatley. A favourite resort of campers is the neighbourhood of Goring Lock, the country about here being well wooded and very pretty, while Pangbourne also is very familiar to frequenters of the Thames. Between Whitchurch Lock and Mapledurham we may see Hardwick House, this stately mansion being the seat of the Lybbe family.

Caversham Bridge, which we now reach, is the nearest point for Reading. A short distance farther on is Sonning, one of the most idyllic spots on the river. Wargrave, with

56.—REGATTA ISLAND.

57.—MEDMENHAM ABBEY.

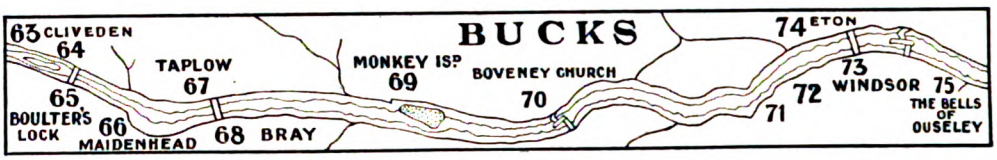
58.—BISHAM ABBEY.

59.—MARLOW CHURCH AND WEIR.

60.—COOKHAM BRIDGE AND HEDSOR.

61.—CLIVEDEN FERRY, COTTAGE, AND WOODS.

62.—CLIVEDEN—MY LADY'S FERRY AND REACH.



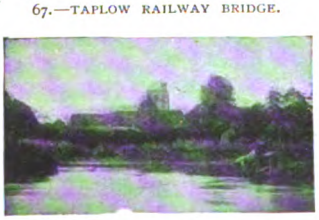
63.—CLIVEDEN—MY LADY'S FERRY FROM BELOW

64.—VIEW FROM CLIVEDEN SIDE.

65.—BOULTER'S LOCK ON A QUIET DAY.

66.—MAIDENHEAD BRIDGE.

67.—TAPLOW RAILWAY BRIDGE.



68.—BRAY CHURCH.

its fine old church and famous George and Dragon Inn, is now passed, and we come to Marsh Lock, below which the stream runs strongly. Henley, famous for its regattas, is a mile farther down, and then, after navigating Hambleden Lock, Medmenham Abbey comes into view. This building is chiefly notorious for its connection with the Medmenham monks of Francis Dashwood and John Wilkes, and when it is mentioned that their familiar nickname in polite circles was the Hell Fire Club, it will be recognised that their general behaviour could scarcely have been so austere

69.—MONKEY ISLAND AND FISHING LODGE.

as their order seemed to warrant.

Bisham Abbey is an historic building dating from the reign of King Stephen, and is now used as a country mansion. It is said to possess a very satisfactory ghost-chamber, which is haunted by the apparition of one of the Ladies Hoby, who beat her little boy to death for inking his copies, and is now condemned to continual vain attempts to wash her own hands in a ghostly basin which goes before her as she walks. Such, at any rate, is the legend.

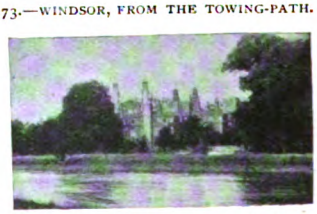
At Marlow Shelley had his home, and his "Revolt of Islam" was written in his boat as it floated under the beech

70.—BOVENEY CHURCH.

71.—WINDSOR.

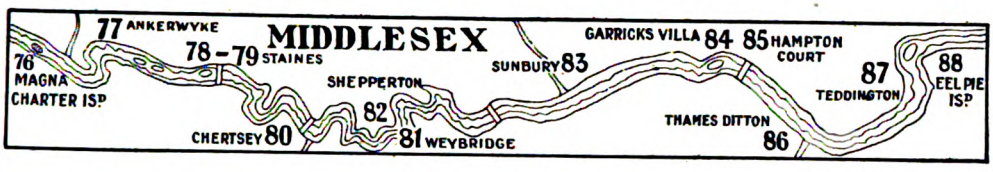
72.—WINDSOR CASTLE.

73.—WINDSOR, FROM THE TOWING-PATH.



74.—ETON, FROM ROMNEY ISLAND.

75.—THE BELLS OF OUSELEY.

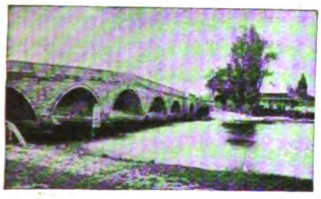


76.—MAGNA CHARTA ISLAND.

77.—ANKERWYKE—THE PICNIC.

78.—STAINES—LONDON STONE.

79.—STAINES BRIDGE.



80.—CHERTSEY BRIDGE.

81.—WEYBRIDGE.

groves of Bisham. The river divides into several channels at Cookham Bridge. Cookham Lock is generally considered to be the most beautifully situated on the river. Hard by is Cliveden, the seat of Mr. W. Waldorf Astor. Boulter's Lock is traversed on the way to Maidenhead, a pretty riverside town. Taplow railway bridge has the largest brick span of any in the world. After beholding the beautiful old church and vicarage at Bray, it is not difficult to understand the determination expressed by the worthy incumbent in the famous song to live and die vicar of Bray.

82.—SHEPPERTON.

Monkey Island, about half a mile lower down, owes its name to a number of pictures of monkeys engaged in various human occupations with which the third Duke of Marlborough adorned a fishing-lodge which he built upon the island. Passing Boveney, we come to Windsor upon the right bank and Eton upon the left. Half a mile farther on is Magna Charta Island, where the famous statute was signed in 1215. Ankerwyke House and the Picnic are next reached. Here Henry VIII. was wont to hold trysts with sweet Anne Boleyn. On the left bank of the river, half a mile below Bell Weir, is London Stone, which formerly marked the

83.—SUNBURY.

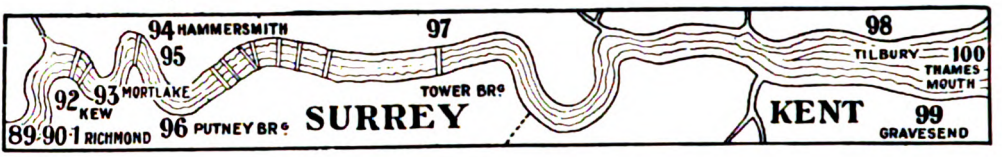
84.—GARRICK'S VILLA AT HAMPTON.

85.—HAMPTON COURT.

86.—SWAN, AT THAMES DITTON.

87.—TEDDINGTON LOCK.

88.—EEL PIE ISLAND.



limit of the jurisdiction of the Conservancy. Leaving Staines behind us, we come to Chertsey Lock. The river here winds very much between flat banks until we come to Shepperton, a little town noted for its excellent fishing. At Sunbury we enter a strong stream known as the Sunbury Race. Among the *notabilia* of Hampton is Garrick's Villa, as the favourite abode of the famous actor is now called.

Hampton Court, that celebrated rendezvous of departed celebrities, is now reached. On the opposite bank we may see the pretty little village of Thames Ditton, with its well-known hotel, the Swan. Negotiating Teddington Lock, we come in view of Eel Pie Island, a favourite resort of picnic parties. Then Richmond is touched at.

89.—STAR AND GARTER, FROM TERRACE, RICHMOND.

95.—VIEW FROM HAMMERSMITH.

90.—RICHMOND BRIDGE.

96.—PUTNEY BRIDGE.

91.—RICHMOND LOCK AND WEIR.

97.—TOWER BRIDGE.

92.—KEW OLD BRIDGE.

98.—TILBURY.

93.—AT THE SHIP, MORTLAKE.

99.—GRAVESEND.

94.—HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE.

100.—MOUTH OF THE THAMES.

Floating under Kew Old Bridge we arrive at Mortlake, the finish of the inter-'Varsity boat-race. Now we are reaching the Metropolis, where the "stream of pleasure" merges itself into the "highway of commerce." Hammersmith and Putney are soon passed, and we come to Tower Bridge. The grey turrets of the ancient Tower take our minds back to medieval times, when this famous fortress was something more than a State museum. Tilbury Fort is now passed, and we drift slowly down Gravesend Reach. Even here the salt breezes of the ocean assail our nostrils, and in a very short time we find ourselves in the estuary of England's mightiest river, which but a short time ago we saw trickle out of the stony ground far away to the west in the Gloucestershire hills.

THE first time I spoke to her on the top of the 'bus we were not what you might call strangers, seeing that we had gone up to town by the same 'bus, off and on, for I don't know how long. That morning I found myself on the same seat as she was. She was reading — I had noticed that she generally was—but when her umbrella fell my way I picked it up, and that broke the ice. I mentioned that I had had the pleasure of travelling on the same omnibus with her on previous occasions, and how it had caught my eye that she generally had something of a reading nature in her hand. And when she said there were few things she liked better than a good story, that smoothed the way; and, having once started, she kept on—my word, she did! I have found it like that more than once before. Until you speak to a young lady she says nothing, but when you do speak to her it's about the last chance of speaking you ever do have—she does all the talking for ever afterwards. There's no mistake that some young ladies do have the gift of conversation. Miss Blott had.

Her name was Blott—Irene Blott. She asked me if I thought the name was a pretty one; but before I had a chance of answering she went on to remark that she was in a tea-shop off Cheapside, but her soul wasn't there, and never would be. She said that when we were at the Walham Green end of the Fulham Road; and as she kept on talking until we reached Cheapside, there was not much about her I did not know by the time we got there. At least, that was the impression that was left upon my mind. Romance was what she cared for. Really and truly she could hardly be said to live for anything else. And if you couldn't get romance in a story, where could you? She subscribed to the Star of Romance Series of Complete Novels by leading authors at one penny each. You couldn't call that dear, could you? I should have said I couldn't if I had had a chance; but I hadn't.

She was what I call a pretty girl, Irene Blott was. And when she turned and looked at me — nice eyes she had, though there was something about one of them which made you wonder if they were quite a match—and said that she never should have thought my name was Briggs, because I reminded her of a character which was in a story she had read, it might have been a month ago, there was something about the manner in which she said it which made a sort of shiver go all over me.

The character in question was a nobleman of the highest rank, and my likeness to him was simply startling. The similarity had struck her the first time she had seen me on the 'bus, and ever since, if she might use the word, it had haunted her. I asked her what kind of looking party this nobleman was—I did manage to get in that much. She said that all she could tell me then was that he was of striking appearance, and once seen never to be forgotten; but if I would meet her that evening she would go into the mystery to the very bottom, for a mystery she was persuaded there must be, and one which ought not to be hidden from me.

I said I would meet her, and I did—at the

corner of Newgate Street—and she was twenty minutes late. As soon as we were on the 'bus—there happened to be one waiting, so we hopped up—she asked me if there had ever been a nobleman in my family whose name began with a "D." I said that so far as I was aware there had not been. She wanted to know if I was perfectly certain. I told her that I could not go so far as that, especially as I had an uncle whose name was Dawkins, and that began with a "D." No; it was no name like Dawkins. Perhaps it would assist me if she were to ask if I had a pink scar on the small of my back shaped like a Maltese cross. I felt that that was rather a delicate question to be asked by a young lady on the top of an omnibus; and I looked round to see if anyone had heard it. Then I hinted that, though I wasn't so well acquainted with the small of my own back as she might think, to the best of my knowledge and belief I had not.

"Oh," she said, and she gave a kind of sigh; "then the mystery deepens. Have you any pressing engagement, Mr. Briggs?" As a matter of fact my supper would be ready for me when I got home, and I should be ready for it. But before I had a chance of saying so she went on: "Because if you haven't, and we were to go together for a little walk in Hyde Park, where we should not be so likely to be overheard, I think I could make it plain to you that there is something mysterious about you of which you haven't any notion."

I did not see how that could be, since it stood to reason that I knew more about myself than she did; still, I did not like to disoblige a young lady, so the end of it was that we got down at Hyde Park Corner and turned into the park. When we had gone a little way she put a question which took me by surprise.

"Mr. Briggs, have you ever rowed in the University Boat Race?"

No, I said, I had not; though I perhaps knew as much about boats as most men; especially as I had nearly been drowned in one—which I was once, in Battersea Park.

"I asked," she explained, "because I have a picture of last year's Oxford crew, and you're the very image of one of them."

"Which one?"

"I couldn't exactly tell you—not from memory; but the likeness is there, unmistakably."

"Seems to me that I'm like more people than I thought I was."

"Ah, you shouldn't laugh at it. No one can ever tell. It may be the hand of destiny." There was a way about her as she said it which was beyond me altogether. Then she asked another question which took me more by surprise than the first had done; though, at the same time, it put me more on my own ground. "Mr. Briggs, have you ever been in love?"

"That depends, Miss Blott, on what you call being in love."

"I mean, have you ever been engaged to be married? Perhaps you are a married man?"

"Do I look it?"

"There's no telling. Not long ago I was walking out with a gentleman who turned out to have buried two wives, and to be married to a third."

"I have not yet had a chance of burying one. Sam Briggs is a bachelor, Miss Blott."

"Ah," she said, "so was he!"

"I beg your pardon," I remarked, "but who might you be referring to as 'he'?"

"The nobleman I was telling you about. I should mention that I was mistaken this morning when I told you his name began with a 'D.' It really began with a 'B.'"

"Same as my name does."

"That deepens the mystery. What makes it more mysterious than ever is the fact that the young lady to whom he became attached was in a tea-shop."

"Was she?"

"And her name began with a 'B.'"

"Did it? Was she what you might call good-looking?"

"Oh, Mr. Briggs, you mustn't ask me such a question. If I was to answer it you'd think that I was fishing. Do you like fair young ladies?"

Now she was dark, with that fuzzy-wuzzy, black, horse-hair kind of hair. So I said: "Certainly not. If there's one thing I can't abide it is a girl who looks as if there'd been soda in the water, and as if her colour had run in the wash."

"Mr. Briggs, you are severe. Perhaps you don't care for young ladies, whether fair or dark."

"Don't I? Do I look as if I was that kind?"

"To be quite candid, the young nobleman whom I've mentioned was extremely fond of the fair sex; and, as I've already told you, your likeness to him is striking."

"In that respect it is. If there's any man who's fonder of the fair sex than I am I'd like to meet him. But perhaps you don't care for men, Miss Blott?"

"Oh, Mr. Briggs!"

"Now what kind of men do you care for, as a rule?"

"Oh, Mr. Briggs, you mustn't ask me, really! It isn't fair."

"Do you like 'em—what you might call—a bit—dashing?"

"Oh, Mr. Briggs, how can I answer such a question, after such a short acquaintance? Doesn't it seem strange that we should only have spoken to each other for the first time this morning? Do you know, I feel as if we were quite old friends."

"You don't look it."

"I suppose not. All my friends tell me how young I really look. It's rather a drawback sometimes. How old would you think I was?"

"Seventeen; not a day more."

"What a good judge of age you are! It's wonderful. As a matter of fact, I'm eighteen; what you might call nineteen. If it's not seeming too curious, Mr. Briggs, might I ask how old you are?"

"I'm what you might call nineteen; though, mind you, in many ways I'm more."

"He was your age."

"Meaning the mysterious nobleman?"

"Isn't it extraordinary that you should be so alike in every respect?"

"It's more than strange; it's—it's jolly queer."

Then I got away as fast as ever I could. I was feeling peckish. For all I could tell she was getting the same. In fact, she did throw out a kind of a hint that there was rather a good restaurant over the road where a gentleman she knew once took a lady friend of hers to supper. The hint was enough for me. From the top of the Brompton Road to Walham Green the 'bus fare is twopence, and twopence was every farthing I had on me. So we parted, as you might say, in a bit of a hurry. Still, I am not denying that she had made what you might describe as an impression on my mind.

The arrangement was that I should look her up the next morning about lunch-time in her tea-shop; and there I was, right to the tick. I saw her directly I put my nose inside the door, in spite of the crowd. She was carrying a large tray with about enough things on it for a small beanfeast. Just as I got in, she hit a young lady, who was lunching off a cup of tea and a sardine, on the head with one of the corners in a way that young lady did not seem to like, though I saw Miss Blott look round and beg her pardon, in a manner which made her drive another corner into an old gentleman who was putting on his hat. I found an empty seat at one of the tables she was serving. As I sat down I took off my hat, and I said, "Good morning, Miss Blott."

"OH, MR. BRIGGS, HOW CAN I ANSWER SUCH A QUESTION, AFTER SUCH A SHORT ACQUAINTANCE?"

But not only did she not answer, but, so to speak, she didn't even notice me. She gave me, if you might call it so, one short side look, as if I was a stone image, and off she went. Two other parties were sitting at my table; one of them digged the other in the side with his elbow, and the other, he dug him back. Then they both of them smiled. I was just on the point of asking what it was they happened to see to smile at when up came Miss Blott again; as she came she drove the corner of an empty tray into the back of my neck. It might have been an accident, but I have my doubts.

"May I ask if you're serving this

"AS SHE CAME SHE DROVE THE CORNER OF AN EMPTY TRAY INTO THE BACK OF MY NECK."

table?" I inquired. "Good morning, Miss Blott."

Again she gave me what you could not help but call the cold shoulder—with her head in the air. All she said was, "That seat you're on is reserved for one of my regular customers."

Those two parties laughed right out. I didn't like it.

"When one of your regular customers comes he can have this seat; till then he can't. In the meantime, perhaps you'll be so good as to bring me a steak-pudding and a cup of cocoa; I'm in a hurry."

Just then somebody at one of her other tables called her, or she pretended that they did; and off she went without paying the slightest attention to me. What was the meaning of her behaviour was more than I could imagine. Those two parties were positively offensive. They both of them got up.

"We're going now," one of them said. "If you like we'll get you something at the counter as we go, in case you're hungry."

I could hear them sniggering together as they went down the shop. If it had been outside I would have talked to them in a different way. But I didn't want to be the cause of unpleasantness with two strangers in a tea-shop. Some persons might not have a reputation to keep up; I have.

Hardly had they gone than back she came. I felt huffy; and I showed it.

"Perhaps you'll let me know if you took my order for that steak-pudding; to say nothing of the cocoa."

That is what I said. What she said was altogether different. Surprise is not the word to describe the feelings with which I heard her. She leaned over the little marble table, and she spoke in a thrilling whisper which reached my ear alone; which, on the whole, was perhaps as well.

"Why do you pursue me? Is it manly? I have discovered everything. Need you ask for more? Do not let us be seen talking together. Go while you are still safe. Delay may mean your ruin; to say nothing of mine." She laid a folded slip of paper before me on the table. "Read that when you are outside. It will explain all. But, in the name of all that's merciful, don't glance at it till you're outside—it may be my undoing. Go, I implore you—before mischief is done which may never be repaired—go at once!"

I went. I had not the dimmest notion what the trouble was; but I went. Without that steak-pudding, let alone the cocoa. Her words and manner gave me such a start that all I thought about was getting clear. When I got outside I opened that piece of paper. This is what was on it:—

"I have discovered that the nobleman whose name begins with a 'B' was a monster of wickedness. Your likeness to him is simply frightful. I dare not tamper with my conscience. It is true that my innocence is all I have, but leave me that. I warn you I am not without friends. Cease to pursue me. I desire that our brief, but eventful, acquaintance should be at an end.—I. B."

Taking it on the whole, it seemed to me that Miss Blott's behaviour was peculiar. And so far from that paper explaining everything, to my mind it explained rather less than nothing at all. Considering that I had come a good deal out of my way for my lunch at her express request, and that I was pressed for time, it was precious poor consolation to have to go without it merely because—so far as I could gather—somebody else's name began with a "B," whether he was a nobleman or whether he wasn't. And as for his being what she called "a monster of wickedness," what that had to do with me was beyond me altogether. No one who knows me can say I'm "a monster of wickedness," or anything near it, I do not care who it is. My jovial moments I may have, being as fond of a bit of fun as anyone; but farther than that Sam Briggs does not go—no! It was cruel hard that I should have to go without my lunch because someone else did.

All the rest of that day, as you might put it, I was off my usual; I am sure no one can say it was surprising. That evening I tried to catch her on a Walham Green, so that I could have it out with her as she was going home. I hung about for nearly an hour, but never caught so much as a glimpse, though I chased two or three wrong young ladies up the 'bus steps, and nearly had trouble with one who had with her what might have been her husband. When I did get home they saw that something was wrong with me; but I am not one to wear my heart upon my sleeve, and when my mother talked about half an ounce of castor oil I as nearly as possible lost my temper.

All that night Miss Blott's conduct towards me rankled to that extent that it almost kept me from my natural sleep. It seemed to me so uncalled for. The first thing the next morning I resolved that I would go again to that tea-shop, no matter what happened, being determined to find out just how I stood with her. I don't care to have a young lady treating me as if I was so much dirt, for nothing at all. In such cases, when it is to be got, an explanation I will have. So I meant to show her. And I did.

About lunch-time round I went. It being Saturday it wasn't so crowded. I saw her directly I was inside; and, what is more, she saw me. She was standing, twiddling the cloth she used to wipe the tables with between her fingers, looking towards the door, so that, as I entered, our eyes met. But beyond their meeting, which I could not help, I took no notice of her whatever. As for going to one of her tables, after her treatment of me the day before—not me; I had more self-respect. I chose a table as far from her as I could get—in the extreme corner, in fact. And there I planted myself. A very nice young lady waited on me—very nice—all smiles, as it were—as ready to pass the time of day as if we had known each other for years. Very quick she was in bringing what I ordered—quite different to what I had had to put up with yesterday.

All the time, though I might not have shown it, I kept looking at Miss Blott out of the corners of my eyes—to that extent I hardly knew what I was eating. Suddenly I glanced up, and there was she, looking at me with what I should describe as a stony gaze. When she saw that I saw her she clasped her hands in front of her, then passed them across her face, and turned away. Was it tears she was brushing from her eyes? Was she crying because of me? The thought made me go hot, then cold. Yet it was extraordinary how impossible I seemed to feel it to get up and speak to her a friendly word. Smoked sausages I was having. I was just getting to the end of my second when the young lady who was attending to me came up and said, in a mysterious whisper, like:—

"Are you Mr. Briggs?" When I said I was she planked down a piece of folded paper. "Then that's for you."

And off she went to give an elderly party at the next table a sardine and butter. I glanced up, and there was Miss Blott peeping at me over a tray-full of plates. So I took up the piece of paper, feeling a trifle nervous, because really in dealing with her it seemed that you never knew what might happen, and on it was this:—

"What I have suffered because of you this past night no pen can tell. What can be the reason? I will trust you still. I cannot help myself. It seems that I am haunted. Be at the Cockspur Street corner of Trafalgar Square to-morrow afternoon at 2.45, and, to prove that my confidence has not been reposed in you in vain, wear a bunch of primroses and a blue necktie. All may still be well. Be merciful as you are strong; 2.45 sharp.

"P.S.—Can you have placed on me a spell?"

Referring to her last question, it was more than I could say. I seemed to have placed something on her. Some queer communications from young ladies have come my way, but to my mind she beat anything. Why she wanted to make an appointment in

"SHE PLANKED DOWN A PIECE OF FOLDED PAPER."

Trafalgar Square when we both of us lived out towards Walham Green was funny. And how I was going to show that her confidence had not been reposed in me in vain by wearing a bunch of primroses and a blue necktie was beyond me altogether.

However, a young fellow does not see as much of the world as I have without finding out that women are very different to men, and that sometimes the most agreeable young ladies behave as if they were not quite right in their heads. So I just waited to give her a nod as she was making out a customer's bill, and on the Sunday afternoon 2.45 found me in Trafalgar Square. In fact, 2.15 found me; which was a pity, because just as I got there it began to drizzle. An umbrella I had not brought, but I had got on a light grey suit and patent leather shoes, so that rain was not altogether what I wanted. It did not come down what you might call hard, but by the time I had waited on a doorstep a good half-hour I began to think that there might be pleasanter ways of spending a Sunday afternoon. A quarter to three came, but no Miss Blott; ten minutes to three, five minutes to three, three o'clock, but still not so much as a glimpse of her. At a quarter-past three I was feeling that I had had about enough of it; when, just as it was coming down harder than ever, who should appear in sight but Miss Blott—under an umbrella which was hardly large enough to cover the whole of her hat.

"Halloa!" I called out, because she was sailing past without looking towards the doorstep on which I was.

"Excuse me—one moment!"

Hearing my voice she came across the sloppy pavement with what you could not describe as a smile on her face.

"It seems to me, Mr. Briggs," she said, "that you must have been born under a fatal star."

"I don't know what I was born under," I replied, "but I do know that I've been standing in the rain for a jolly good hour, and that now it looks as if there was going to be a flood."

"And I've got on my new delaine," she said, "and goodness only knows what it's like round the bottom; and my hat's spoilt. A nice thing your bringing me all this way on a day like this!"

That did strike me as being an uncalled-for thing to say.

"I thought," I remarked, "that it was the other way round—that it was you who brought me. Who asked me to wear a bunch of primroses and a blue necktie?"

"I don't know what right you have to speak to me like that, Mr. Briggs. I can soon tell you what I came for."

"I was thinking that you might have come to see me."

We were not having at all the sort of conversation I had hoped to have; so my idea was to try to give it a turn. But it was not to be done. Anything more stiff than her manner you could not imagine. Of course, I followed suit. As I have said, I am not one to wear my heart on my sleeve. I could be as cold as anyone.

"Then that's where you're wrong," she said. "I have not come to see you; far

from it. I have simply come to tell you that all is over between us."

"All what?" I asked.

"Everything," she said.

I am not denying that it was of the nature of a blow to be spoken to like that, especially after giving up my Sunday afternoon to stand in the rain; but you have to learn to bear things.

"All right," I told her. I dare say my tone was a bit bitter; you cannot keep all your feelings hidden. "I'm willing."

"A young lady has to be careful, Mr. Briggs; in my position she has to look ahead. I may tell you I have other friends in my eye."

"Gentlemen?"

"Certainly. Do you imagine for one moment that I'd have anyone for a friend of mine who wasn't a gentleman?"

"What I meant was, weren't any of them ladies?"

"Of course, I have lady acquaintances—heaps; too many, perhaps; but hardly, as you might say, friends—at least, not in the same sense."

"I suppose not."

"You see, a young lady in my position has opportunities; and she owes it to herself to make the most of them."

"I'm afraid I don't quite follow."

She smiled, and she put her hat straight. I could not help feeling that she was nice-looking. It seemed hard to be on such terms with her. If she had only talked as she had done that first night in Hyde Park! It only shows you how a girl does change.

"If you held a position in a tea-shop, Mr. Briggs, and were a young lady who has been considered to be not without attractions, you would understand what I mean. Why, if I chose, I might walk out with a fresh gentleman every evening of my life."

"Might you?"

"I might, if I were that sort—which I'm not. There are few who have more chances than I have to pick and choose—though I say it."

"I shouldn't wonder."

"You must admit that a young lady owes it to herself to take advantage of her chances while she has them; now do you follow me?"

"I'm beginning to."

I was! But when she went on she took me right aback.

"To show what I mean," she said, very seriously—she made me feel serious too—"I may mention that another gentleman is waiting for me on the other side of the Square, in front of St. Martin's Church, with whom I have an appointment at a quarter to four."

"Oh!" I said; practically, at the moment, that was all I could say.

"And I expect that shortly there'll be another gentleman at the corner of Suffolk Street, whom I'm to meet at a quarter to five."

That time I could say nothing; I could only look at her. It seemed to me that she had a partiality for the neighbourhood of Trafalgar Square.

"And perhaps later on," she added, "there may be another in Spring Gardens."

That was a shade too much, as I let her see.

"Pardon me, Miss Blott, but if I'd known that you'd had all these other appointments I should have stayed at home."

"Now, it's no use your adopting that tone, Mr. Briggs, because what is a young lady to do?"

"I'm sure I don't know."

"But I do; she has to do what she can. Situated as I am, having to make several new friends every week, I am bound, as I put it, to test them, or very soon I shouldn't know where I was. And Sunday being the only day I have to myself, I use it to sift the false from the true—meaning no offence. But I cannot afford to waste my time—nowadays no young lady can; and what I have to ask myself, when a gentleman makes himself known to me, is, are his intentions serious, and can he afford to keep a wife and a servant; because a servant I will have, even though it's only a young girl. Now, Mr. Briggs, I will be quite candid with you, knowing nothing of you, and will say this. Supposing we were to become attached to each other—and I own that there's something about you which might soon make you dangerous to my peace of mind, because, as it is, you've kept me awake two nights; and if you don't dislike me—because, of course, if you do, there's an end of the matter——"

"I never said that I disliked you."

"Then what I say is, supposing that we were to fall in love, so that I couldn't be happy without you and you couldn't be happy without me, and the whole world was full of each other; because I'm of a very loving nature, Mr. Briggs, and where a gentleman is fascinating might all too quickly become attached. In that case—and, of course, only in that case—are you in a position to provide a wife with all that a loving husband should provide her?"

"I'm afraid not—not at the moment. But, of course, I hope to be."

"When?"

"That's the question, isn't it?"

"It is the question; because I don't mind telling you that, if I were to fall in love with you—and I feel you're dangerous—I should like to marry at once. I should feel safer."

I did not know what to say to her. She had a way about her which made me feel confused. I had no idea she would talk to me like that when I left home, not having the faintest glimmering of an idea that she was that kind of girl. How often it is like that! Upon my word, when you are dealing with a young lady you never know where you are.

"It's like this with me, Miss Blott," I managed to get out at last, when I felt that her eyes were piercing me like gimlets: nice eyes they were, though not quite a match. "At present I'm getting thirty shillings a week, and I'm not marrying on that."

"Hardly keep a servant on that, could you? And at least a young girl I will have."

"I'm not saying you're wrong, though servants are not all blessings—at least, so I've been given to understand."

"Anything put by for the furniture?"

"Not one penny."

"Ah!" she sighed. I could not have looked at her just then not for any amount; to that extent did her sigh go through me.

"You ought to save, Mr. Briggs."

"I've always said to myself, Miss Blott, that under three pounds a week I'd never marry; my own tastes being what some might describe as a bit lofty."

"And is there any immediate prospect of your getting that amount?"

"So far as I'm able to judge—no."

"Is there any certainty that you'll ever get it?"

"I can't say that, either. The firm I'm with is not one that jumps you up by leaps and bounds."

"Then am I not right in saying what I have said? Circumstanced as we are, is it not better that we should part—before our feelings get beyond us? And now, as the time is going on, I think that I had better keep the appointment with my friend who is waiting for me in front of St. Martin's Church. So good-bye, Mr. Briggs; I hope we part as friends?"

"Certainly, Miss Blott, so far as I'm concerned; good friends. This is an experience I sha'n't soon forget."

"Ah, Mr. Briggs, I've had many such!"

As I watched her picking her way through the pools across the Square, under that small umbrella of hers—it was still coming down cats and dogs—I did not doubt that she had. Very attractive she looked from behind as she went through the rain, holding her skirt up. As I saw her going I seemed to have lost something. I hoped that the party in front of the church would be worthy of her. Though I could not help thinking that if she was going to talk to him as she had talked to me, I should like to see his face and hear what he said to her. And it would not have been bad sport to have been present at the interview with her other friend at the corner of Suffolk Street; to say nothing of the party who might be in Spring Gardens.

"VERY ATTRACTIVE SHE LOOKED FROM BEHIND AS SHE WENT THROUGH THE RAIN."

The more I thought it over—and I did a deal of thinking before I went to sleep that night—the plainer it became to me that there's something about a girl which is altogether different to a man. I am not saying that she was not right — I own that it is only common sense that a girl should look after herself — but it does seem strange that with a romantic nature like hers — and anyone more romantic I never met—she should be so practical.

I dare say she will make a good wife to whoever gets her; and, from what I could see of the way she handles things, I should say that it will be no fault of hers if someone does not get her soon.

Though, considering that she did not take the least notice of them, why she made a point of my wearing a bunch of primroses and a blue necktie—and they both cost money—is beyond me altogether.

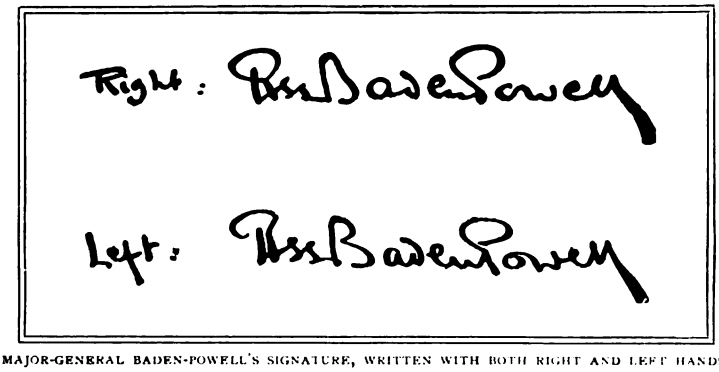
AMBIDEXTERITY.

SOME CELEBRITIES WHO ARE EQUALLY CLEVER WITH BOTH HANDS.

By Gordon Raymond.

"I DO not consider a man is a thoroughly-trained soldier unless he can mount equally well on either side of his horse, use sword, pistol, and lance equally well with both hands, and shoot off the left shoulder as rapidly and accurately as from the right."

Such is the opinion of that beau-ideal of the fighting-man, Major-General R. S. S. Baden-Powell, himself one of the few who are able to use either hand with equal facility. On one occasion, at least, his ambidexterity proved of immense value. He was bitten severely in the right arm by a dog, yet, though suffering great pain and compelled to carry the arm in a sling, he was able to follow twenty days' manœuvres on horseback, and during that time never asked to be excused a single duty. He sent in his reports as usual, all beautifully written with the left hand, and neatly illustrated by explanatory maps and sketches.



MAJOR-GENERAL BADEN-POWELL'S SIGNATURE, WRITTEN WITH BOTH RIGHT AND LEFT HANDS.

It is a well-known fact that those wonderful little warriors, the Japanese, can use their weapons with equal skill in either hand, for they are trained to be ambidextrous from childhood. At school they are taught to write and draw with both hands, and it is to this early training that many attribute the superiority of the Japanese in certain forms of art. In drawing and painting no supporting device whatever is used, the entire arm being employed.

The German educational authorities, too, are at present giving considerable attention to left-hand work, especially in their technical and mechanical schools. The students are taught to saw, plane, and hammer as well with the left hand as with the right, and the economical and industrial importance of ambidexterity is firmly impressed upon the minds of the young men and women.

Many reasons have been advanced for the prevalence of right-handedness. It is by some said to be the result of nursing and infantile treatment, to be due to early practice in writing and drawing, to be the outcome of warfare, education, and heredity, the result of mechanical law, the effect of visceral distribution, and other remote causes. Sir James Sawyer declares that the preferential use of the right hand is due to the fact that in primitive days, when those took who had the power and those retained who could, man used the right hand for purposes of offence, so as to keep the heart—the vital spot—as far away as possible from the assault of an adversary. Recent experiments and observations, however, prove that single-handedness is merely the result of faulty or restricted education.

It is a curious instance of human contrariness that should one eye, one ear, or one leg of a child show signs of diminished vigour, the parents would instantly seek the cause of, and, if possible, the remedy for, that lamentable condition; yet, for some inexplicable reason or prejudice, the left hand of the average child is ruthlessly and deliberately boycotted, until in mature years it is an undeveloped, useless, and almost unnecessary appendage.

Careful observations have shown that out

of every hundred persons born into this world eighty are congenitally ambidextrous—that is to say, they will instinctively reach for an object with either hand—and only require proper instruction and training to develop both hands and arms to an equal degree of strength and skill. Of the remaining twenty, seventeen will be right-handed, while the other three will show a natural bias towards the left hand. The cultivation, therefore, of ambidexterity offers no insuperable difficulties, and the economical, physiological, and psychological advantages are enormous.

A GIRL'S FIRST ATTEMPT AT DRAWING TWO DIFFERENT DESIGNS, ONE WITH EACH HAND, AT THE SAME TIME.

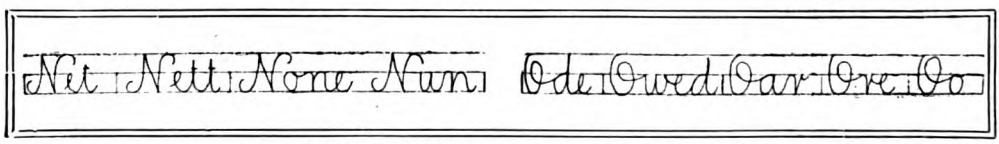
Much of the mechanical work that is done with the right hand could be done as well with the left if that member were sufficiently trained, and the division of labour thus made possible would result not only in more efficient work, but in an increased quantity of it. Indeed, the efficient nation of the future will have to be ambidextrous.

To enumerate the professions, industries, occupations, and even recreations in which the equally facile and skilful use of both hands would be an advantage is unnecessary, as many of them must be immediately obvious to anyone who has given the subject a moment's consideration. Much more interesting is it to note the opinions and experiences of distinguished people in widely differing phases of life who are themselves ambidextrous.

Many famous physicians and surgeons have found this double-handed condition of the utmost utility. Mr. Simeon Snell, F.R.C.S., the celebrated oculist, is very proud of the fact that he can use one hand with just as much facility as the other in operations. "The first time I operated," he says, "for the removal of a cataract I used the right hand for the right eye and the left hand for the left eye. I was equally successful with both, and since that time I have invariably continued to use the left hand for the left eye and the right hand for the right eye."

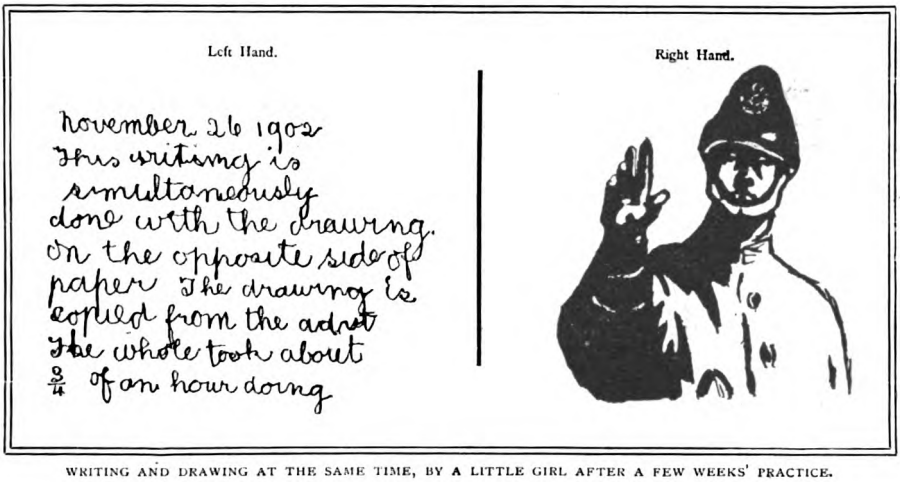
Surgeon-General A. F. Bradshaw, C.B., honorary physician to the King, is also an ambidexter. "When a boy," he writes, "I trained my left hand to be as familiar as its fellow with foil, single-stick, knife, scissors, etc., and I also learned to write with both hands." The distinguished microscopist, Dr. Dallinger, is even more enthusiastic. "In my scientific work," he says, "I have accustomed myself to the use of both hands almost with equal facility. In very delicate work, such as section-cutting and diatom-mounting or very delicate dissecting, I soon acquired the ability to use either hand, thereby saving time and securing better results."

But valuable as is the faculty of using either hand as occasion demands, the ability to employ them simultaneously on two different occupations is, it must be conceded, of still greater service. Simultaneous writing and drawing is now being taught in a number of schools in this country, and in many cases the results are really marvellous, as can be seen by a reference to the accompanying illustrations and the explanatory descriptions beneath them.



SIMULTANEOUS TWO-HANDED WRITING BY A GIRL OF SIXTEEN.

Many famous painters have possessed wonderful skill in this direction, and Mr. Solomon Hart, R.A., has left on record an interesting instance of Sir Edwin Landseer's power of simultaneous work. The incident was the outcome of a debate in a fashionable drawing-room at which were present many famous artists, which a bored young lady tried to closure by emphatically declaring that no one could draw two pictures at the same time. This Sir Edwin Landseer politely denied, and to prove it he there and then drew a stag's head with his right hand and the head of a dog with his left. The versatile Leonardo da Vinci also possessed this faculty, and it was said of him that "he could draw with that ineffable left hand a line firmer, finer, truer than has been drawn by the hand of any other man."



WRITING AND DRAWING AT THE SAME TIME, BY A LITTLE GIRL AFTER A FEW WEEKS' PRACTICE.

The wonderful results of persistent ambidextral culture have never, perhaps, been more clearly and completely demonstrated than in the case of the great juggler, Cinquevalli. His muscular and mental co-ordination is phenomenal. He balances a hat on a stick that rests upon his upturned face, he twirls a hat on another stick that he holds in his right hand, whilst with the left he juggles with two other hats, which he keeps in continual motion by throwing them up in the air alternately.

He can play an accompaniment with the left hand to his own whistling of various tunes dictated to him by a person standing on his left. At the same time he is writing a letter with his right hand dictated by another person standing on his right. He can also follow a conversation between two people, juggle two or three objects with his right hand, and all the time follow on the piano, with his left hand, a third person who is trying to puzzle him by rushing from one tune to another.

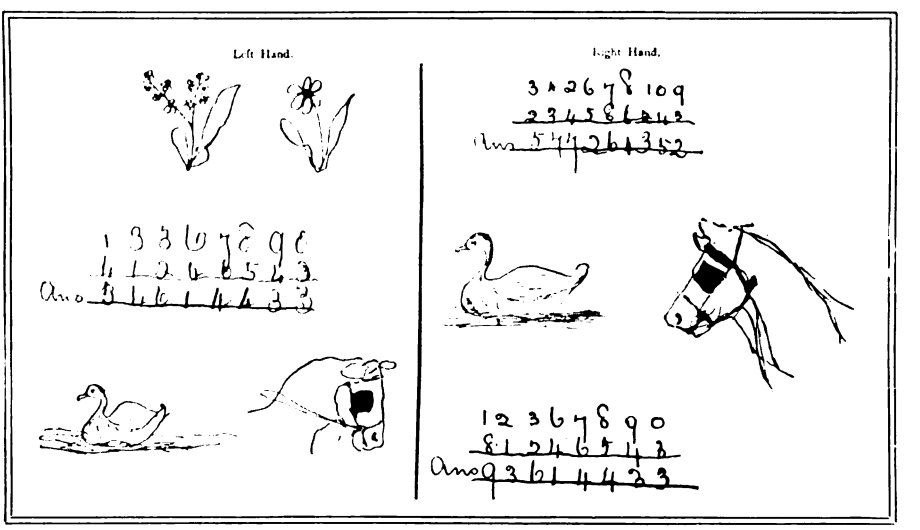
From the purely educational point of view, however, perhaps the most important result of the cultivation of bi-manual skill is its healthful and strengthening action directly upon the brain itself. It is a well-known physiological fact that the brain centres which control and direct the right side of the body are located in the left lobe of the brain, and *vice versa*. The preferential cultivation of the right hand, therefore, implies that the left lobe of the brain must, through the more frequent employment, be developed to a greater degree than the right, and thus not only is there unequal manual, but also unequal mental development. The better and firmer the union of each hand with its proper cerebral hemisphere, and the more the two hands are worked together, the better will be the balance of the brain and mind; the better also will be the thought, the reason, and the imagination.

The recognition of this physiological fact has enabled many physicians to strengthen weak intellects and correct mental deficiencies in children, merely by inculcating the practice of using both hands to an equal extent.

Dr. Sequin, for instance, who has for some time practised an ambidextral system of dealing with the feeble-minded and idiot children under his care, says that immoral habits and tendencies, in all their diversified manifestations, amongst the idiots and im-

beciles diminish according as the powers of prehension and intelligent handling develop themselves. The hand, in fact, is generally an accurate guide to the mind, especially in the case of the young, where its natural shape, size, and power have not been affected by industrial or other causes, and the lack of proper control over the hands is generally an accompaniment of weak intellect, while in extreme cases of idiocy the hands absolutely hang down from the wrists, and there is practically no mental control over them whatever.

The faculty of simultaneous composition on two entirely different subjects is somewhat rare as yet, but, judging from some of the specimens of such work done by clever



SIMULTANEOUS TWO-HANDED WORK AFTER A FEW WEEKS' PRACTICE.

English school-children, will be more common in the near future. Considering the immature years of the children, the class of the work, as can be judged by the accompanying illustrations, is really almost incredible. The fact of children of from nine to sixteen years of age being able simultaneously to compose and write two different letters at the same time is something to startle and surprise those who are not *au courant* with modern educational methods and progress. That the late Sir Augustus Harris was able to dictate to three separate typists at the same time now looks, after all, quite a modest feat in comparison with the efforts of these youthful school-children.

Both from a military and from a commercial point of view England as a nation has everything to gain from the spread of this bi-manual cult. There are, it is to be feared, few British soldiers who would qualify under Major-General Baden-Powell's tests, yet the military value of ambidexterity was recognised by the ancients. The old Greek warriors knew its worth, for the more distinguished soldiers who formed the first line of the battalions were men able to fight equally well with the left hand or the right. The ancient Scythians, too—fierce fighters, but, nevertheless, a highly-cultured people—were enjoined to exercise both hands and arms alike, while, as already stated, the Japanese are, and have been from time immemorial, a people trained to the highest degree of ambidextral skill. It is worthy of note, in conclusion, that all these peoples excelled not merely in combat and in all manly sports, but that each in its time has proved equally great in mental culture and the fine arts.

[*The Illustrations in this article are from Mr. John Jackson's book on "Ambidexterity," by kind permission of the Publishers, Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Limited.*]

The Sacrifice of Isaac.

By Joseph Keating.

"THERE never was a boy like our Isaac," said his father, shaking his head — bewildered, marvelling, and wholly worshipping the thought of the boy; "he's *got* a head on him!"

Then, in an instant, all his wonder at Isaac's wisdom was lost in terror for the boy's life, and only the father's love for his child remained.

"What's that?"

The boy's voice came sharply out of the darkness and silence.

Ike looked back, startled, through the posts towards his son.

A great flash of blue flame swept across the face of the coal—from the lower to the upper side it came—and flew by in front of the boy's eyes. It flashed by and left, as it were, its dazzling reflection behind, filling the place with a tinge of blue fire, and making the posts look like sulphurous ghosts.

"What's that?" echoed the man, and he rushed back to his boy. "That's what it is!" he roared.

Like thunder following the track of lightning came the crash of the bursting flame. Somewhere in the upper workings—not far off, for the roar shook the roof down and almost split the boy's ears—the coal-gas had caught a lamp, had made a great balloon of fire which expanded to its limits, then burst.

"Explosion!" came in a whisper of awe from the man and boy together, as each raised his lamp and stared into the other's face.

The father caught up the son in his arms to rush away. Cries of terror—some faint, some loud—came through the darkness Men and boys all over the workings were flying in their fright—a few into safety, but most of them, without knowing it, rushing into the black mouth of death itself.

"We must run, too," cried Ike.

But at the same time a crowd of men and boys came rushing up through the opening in the lower side of the "place," from where the roar of the explosion had come. Old men, young men, and boys passed, squeezing through among the posts, shouting and crying.

Their lamps were swinging wildly, and the many lights illumined the dark "stall" like a palace at night. Fathers were carrying their little sons; bigger sons were carrying old fathers. All passed through the spaces between the posts in a shapeless heap, like a herd driven by the lash of a fiery whip, and over them all, men and boys, flashed the tinge of blue flame that filled the place.

"The fire—the fire is behind!" they cried.

The first and natural impulse of Ike was to leap in amongst them and rush out in the same direction. With the boy in his arms he sprang towards the crowd of men.

But Ike was by nature a calm man. The first shock had disturbed him only for a moment. Instead of pressing onward he drew back.

"No," said he; "they are wrong. The flash did not come from *behind*. They are rushing towards the fire."

He caught at the arm of the hindmost man of the crowd.

"Back!" said he; and he turned his face out to the dark roadway of his "stall." "Easier to get out this way."

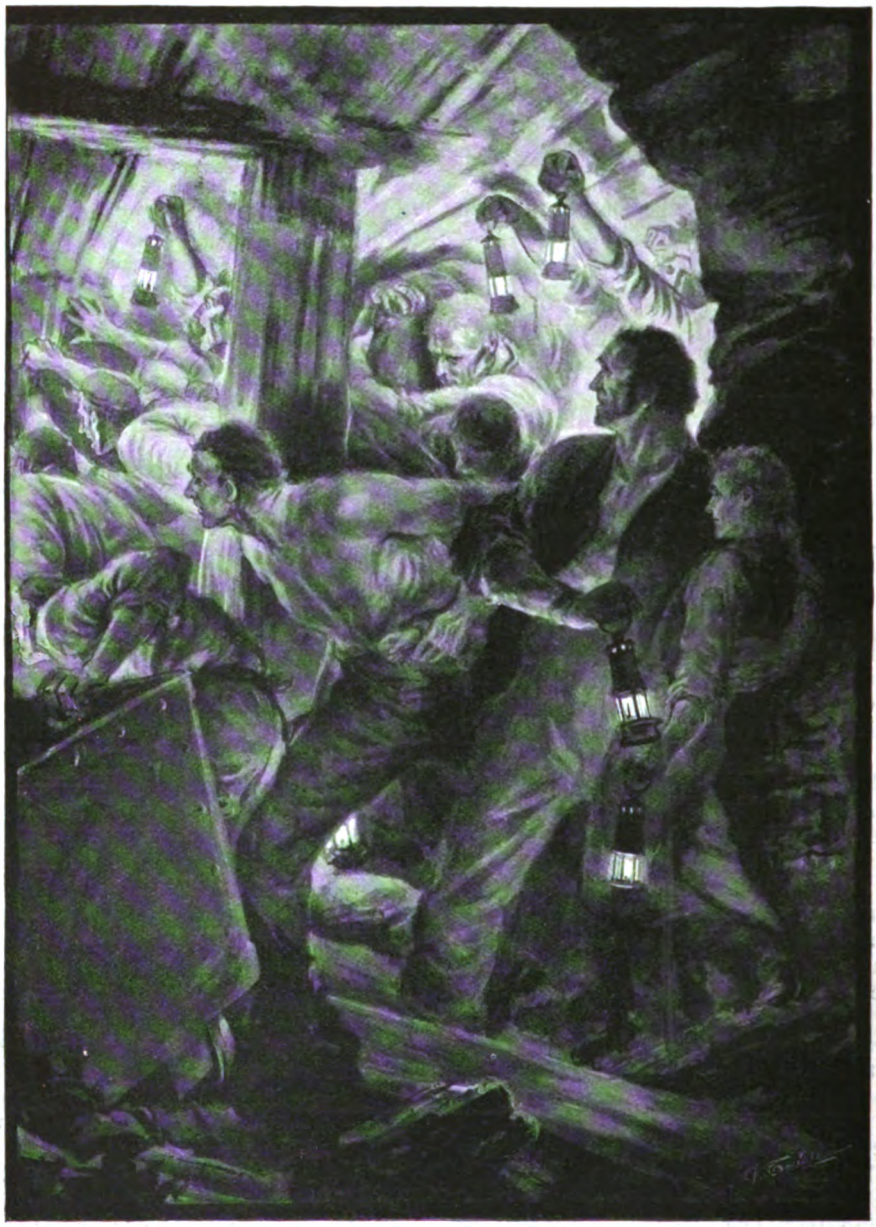
But in the panic of the moment the man shook him off.

"Let me go!" he roared, and he squeezed himself in behind his fellows. Terror had filled his brain. Ike could do nothing with him. There was his own boy to consider. Ike backed out between the posts and ran up the "stall" road, away from the blue-tinted flame behind.

The road along which he was running with Isaac, his son, in his arms, to find a way of escape, was narrow and lined with timber. The lamp in his hand gleamed upon the rails of a tram-road under foot, and upon the timbers across the low roof and down the side-walls. Clouds of black dust rose around the light as he ran. Ike knew every twist and turn of the workings. They came to a bend of the road into an open space. To the left ran another road, narrower, but with timber and tram-rails just the same. Ike turned a little way up this road, then stopped and put his boy down on his feet, and held his lamp to the lad's eyes.

"Now, Isaac," said he, "you are safe here. No fire or smoke can reach this road."

The boy's faith in his father was seen in his eyes as he looked up. He believed his father could do all things.



"THEY ARE RUSHING TOWARDS THE FIRE."

Ike was a squat, awkward man, with hollow cheeks and dull grey eyes; but he had more strength and sense behind those dull eyes than you would think. It was only because he had worked all his life in the darkness of this Welsh pit that he looked so awkward.

"All the others," said he to the boy, "are rushing to their death. But I can do something to put a stop to it. There is one way, and I suppose I must do it."

Ike said this quite cheerfully. He was so sure of himself. He was a genuine product of the Welsh mines, and really had very little regard for death so far as he himself was concerned. But he had the vision of the others rushing into the danger when they thought they were avoiding it.

"If the fire don't get 'em," he explained, "the after-damp will, and they will all be suffocated for running out the wrong way.

Now, Isaac, you are a clever boy. Have you got the courage to stay here by yourself till I come back?"

Isaac, his son, thought it a fine thing to imitate the calm manner of this father of his, who thought him such a wonderful boy. He merely blinked in the light.

"Make haste back," said he, trimming his own lamp.

"You stay in this road; don't move out of it."

"Make haste back," repeated the boy, sitting quite at his ease in the side, with his light between his feet.

The man turned away down the road and ran up another road. His light showed him the way—showed him the cracked timbers and the fallen stones which the force of the explosion had shaken from the roof. He clambered over. He had not far to go. His knowledge of the workings was complete. He merely intended opening one particular door. But by the opening of that door the air would "lead" the fire and its poisonous fumes into a hole where it could harm no one. In his mind as he ran was the painful idea of hundreds of panic-struck miners rushing along the wrong road into the flames or the equally deadly fumes.

"I must turn the wrong road into the right one," was the simple idea behind Ike's dull grey eyes.

He crawled through a narrow airway. This was a short cut. He leaped out into the great main road, "West Level," where the separation doors divided the air-current. He was in a centre where three roads turned off, and at the mouth of each road was an air-door. The extreme point of his lamp-rays reached the outer door—on his left. But he turned to the right inwards. His light flashed upon the door on his right. It was a big, wide door—an arrangement of strong planks with mason-built side-walls.

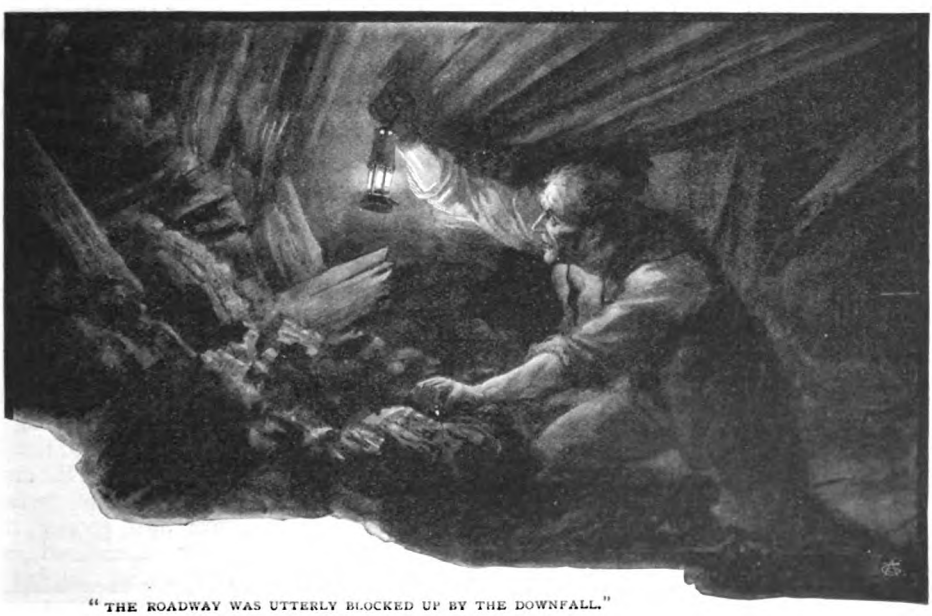
But it was the inner door of all that Ike wanted to open.

He hurried forward. Here again was another road on his left without any door. He threw an anxious look up this road. He had worked out the problem and knew that it was in the workings up there that the explosion had first burst out. Down that road the fire and its deadly after-damp would come, and overtake all the men and boys rushing out on the main level, unless he did what he had set out to do—open the inner door and divert the course of the air, and lead the flames and gas poisons inward. That simple action would keep the danger behind the men and give them time to reach the shaft-bottom safely.

He caught just a glimmer of red up this danger-road.

"I must be quick," said he, and he sprang forward to get at the great door inside.

Then his heart leaped into his mouth with terror. *He saw that he could not reach the inner door!* The shock of the explosion had drawn down the roof; the roadway was utterly blocked up by the downfall. His light showed



"THE ROADWAY WAS UTTERLY BLOCKED UP BY THE DOWNFALL."

him the big loose stones, piled one upon the other up to the broken timber across the roof.

"Is it God's will to destroy us all?" he whispered, terrified.

He heard faintly the cries of the men and boys beyond the outer door on the main level; while from the mouth of the open door he had just passed there came a whirlwind of dust, and the dust was fiery. It glowed with myriads of glittering specks—the fatal dust that comes after an explosion. Poison and suffocation were in its fumes. The dust-cloud screamed as it whirled over him. He flung himself face downwards upon the ground. But he kept his lamp firm and upright. He and the light would live for a few minutes even through this.

In a moment he had lifted himself and was staggering backwards. But now he was groaning. It was not the agony of the body. It was the agony of the soul. He was struggling towards the door which a minute before he had passed. He was holding his light to this door, staring at it. He knew well what must happen. There was no chance at all of the fire passing inwards now. The fall of roof would stop that. The failure with the inner door was bad indeed. The heat and fumes now gathering around him would gradually accumulate in that little centre and expand. Then an outlet must be found. The weakest spot was the other door on the main level, beyond which were the outrushing men and boys. The pure air coming straight from the shaft would draw the force in that direction.

When the expansion had reached bursting point, down would go that outer door. Then Heaven pity all old men, young men, and boys. Death would easily catch up with the runners. The poisoned air would overtake them, creep into their lungs, and, while they thought they were reaching home, they would be falling unconscious in the dust.

There *was* only one way now to save them. But that one way was terrible. Open this door on which his light shone! That would give the heat and poison its outlet. *But it would send death up the road where he had left his own son*—the boy who had said "Make haste back, father"—and Ike was beating his breast at the thought of it.

"My son—my own son!" he groaned.

His light gleamed upon the insensible wood. The heat and gases were choking him. His eyes were burning. His breath came in gasps. But he was not thinking of his own danger. Outside he still heard faintly the cries of the others. By opening that door he would save a hundred lives, and destroy one that was worth all the hundred. He was doomed to choose between these two doors!

"Must I save these strangers and kill my own boy?" he asked, and he looked in horror at the door.

Again he heard the faint cries of those beyond the outer door. He raised his hand tremblingly to open the safety-valve. But a vision of his boy appeared before his eyes—the son whom he had left sitting in that narrow road. He saw him as plainly as if he were still holding the light to the boy's face; and the thin cheeks and bright, calm eyes were all there before the man's gaze. His shuddering hand dropped from the door.

"I can't do it—I can't do it!" he cried, in agony.

Then the cries from beyond brought into the vision a sound as of a voice commanding him to the sacrifice. The love of God, the love of his fellow-man, the love of a father—all were at stake. The humble man was like Abraham when God made trial of his faith by calling upon him to sacrifice his child. "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him there for a burnt offering!" It was the supreme trial.

"The Lord spared Abraham's son!" he cried. "Will he spare mine?"

With a groan he raised his hand to the door and dashed it open.

The hiss and scream of the escaping elements whirling past his ears were like the laughter of demons. Death was rushing up to his boy. Outside the other door he heard the frenzied crowd, shouting and crying. They did not know what sacrifice was taking place within—the sacrifice that would save them. But, finding the air still pure and the way still clear, they rushed outwards to their homes with joyous shouts.

"They are safe," muttered Isaac's father. "They do not know that my boy—my own son——. Oh, Heaven, pity me!"

The only real chance of safety for himself now was to follow the others. That was the way of escape. But that way was not for him. He was blindly groping inwards, up the road towards his son. He could feel the deadly irritant in the poisoned air. It burned his eyes and swelled his lungs. But the hope of saving the boy gave him greater than human power, and he blundered and stumbled upward over the heaps of broken timber and fallen stones. Throughout that

supreme moment he had been like a man listening to the pure spirit that is always urging us to do noble things—deeds that to the selfish world would seem to be utterly beyond the rational. But it would be equally great folly to suppose that human nature is never capable of rising above the dead level of earth. The littlest of us have to face the biggest problems. The world is peopled with great souls as well as little bodies. Poor Ike

overpowered him and stretched him senseless across the roadway.

But the game was not badly played for all that. Because, as Ike fell, unconscious, a solitary clear light appeared behind him in the darkness. That light came swiftly to him; the one who carried it was a strong, big man, who bent down over Ike with a shout of satisfaction.

"Just in time!" he burst out. "Just in

"'JUST IN TIME!' HE BURST OUT. 'JUST IN TIME!'"

was one of the great souls. The history of the obscure people to whom this boy and man belonged is brilliant with fine things. No one knows how they are done, for the folk are simple and quite unconscious of the word "noble"; and, I suppose, this episode of the Ffrwd pit is merely one more among the others unrecorded anywhere except in heaven.

"My son—my own son!" was his cry, as he staggered inwards. Once or twice he tried to call the boy's name, wondering if he could hear. But the poison had crept into his lungs. His voice was feeble and his strength gone. His limbs weakened; he stumbled and fell, groaning, in the dust.

"I can never reach him," he said.

Not even the frenzied hope in his soul could help him farther. The poisoned air

time! Found him, just in time—the boy was right—young Isaac was quite right."

The big man put his strong arm under him and picked him up.

"Come on — come on!" he shouted. "You are safe enough now. But we'll have to run for it."

And literally carrying Ike as if he were a child, the big man rushed back, leaped into the level road, pulled open the big door, dashed through, and closed the door behind him with a crash; then rushed outward.

The fresh wind at once brought consciousness back. Ike opened his eyes. He saw who was carrying him. He recognised him as the man whom he himself had caught by the arm when the terror-stricken crowd were pressing through the narrow "place" just after the explosion. Ike looked up at him,

crying out in agony: "Why have you saved me? My boy is dead! Why have you saved me?"

The man answered tenderly, still pressing towards the lights.

"It's all right, Ike; it's all right. Isaac is safe enough. You caught my arm. But I was too frightened then to listen. But I soon saw who was right. I turned back and made two or three come back with me. We turned back up your road into the 'return,' and saw your boy a minute after you left him. He told us where you had gone. We knew it might turn out too dangerous to let him stop there. But he would not go. I had to promise to go back and look for you. He told me what road you were in. I ran back to look for you. I found you just in time."

"But Isaac—my son—where is he?"

"With my butties, who carried him out through the 'return'—long before you opened the air-bridge door. He is safe enough by this time."

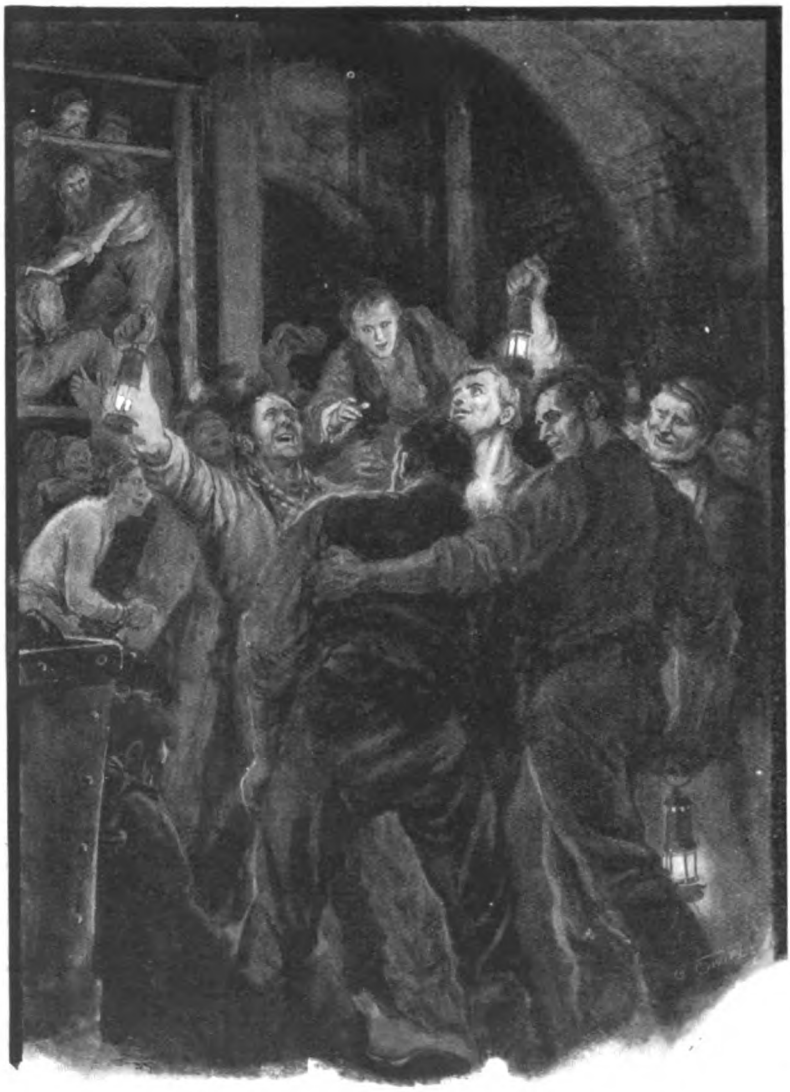
They were nearing the bottom of the shaft itself. There the great crowd of men and boys whom Ike had saved were pressing round the cage, chattering, laughing, waving their arms, and shouting joyously over their escape; and the cages were going swiftly up the shaft, taking the men up to the sunlight. Ike had struggled to his feet. They had reached the edge of the crowd. The lights dazzled his eyes and he could not see.

"Isaac! Isaac!" he cried.

A calm, boyish voice hailed him.

"Halloa, butty!"

And Isaac's father found a pair of small arms affectionately round his neck. He had just a glimpse of his boy's little, thin face and bright eyes. Then he burst into tears. A man was carrying the youngster shoulder high. The crowd at the shaft bottom sent up a great shout of welcome. A moment more and father and son were in the up-going cage, rising swiftly into the beautiful light of day.



"THE CROWD AT THE SHAFT BOTTOM SENT UP A GREAT SHOUT."

The Life-Story of the Goat Moth.

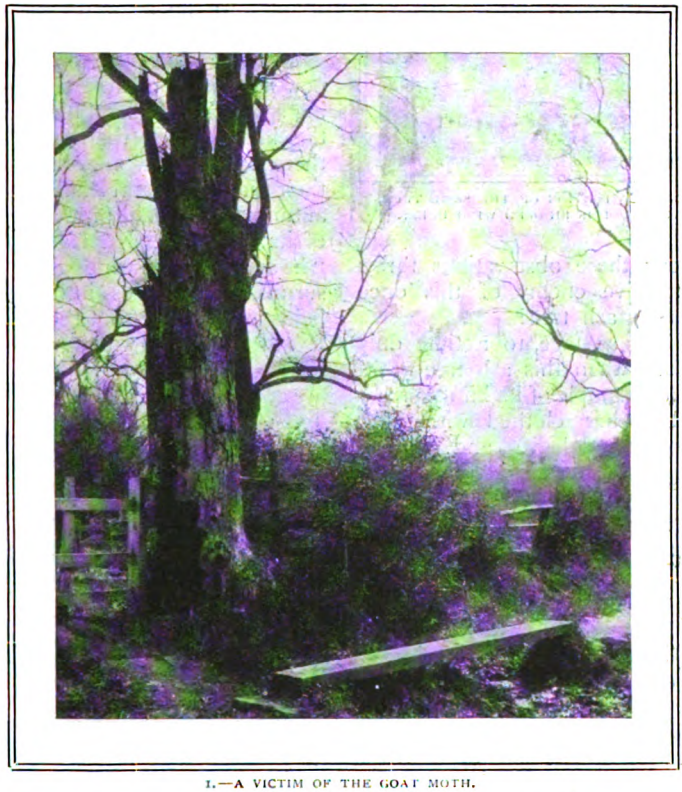
A MOTH THAT FELLS GREAT TREES.

By John J. Ward,

Author of "Minute Marvels of Nature," "Peeps Into Nature's Ways," etc. Illustrated from Photographs by the Author.

PROBABLY everyone has, during his country rambles, observed from time to time a tree such as that depicted in illustration Fig. 1. The photograph shows a wrecked ash tree—a tree, evidently, that was once healthy and flourishing, otherwise it could not have attained such proportions. What, then, brought it to its present state?

On looking into the heart of the tree trunk, where it is seen to be broken open, we observe that it is riddled with holes, many of them wide enough to admit one's finger, and by pulling away some of this riddled wood (which crumbles as we touch it) we find that these holes are the openings to tunnels or burrows; in fact, we soon discover that the once solid trunk has become a dry, powdery mass, honeycombed with these tube-



1.—A VICTIM OF THE GOAT MOTH.

From a superficial glance we might imagine that lightning had been the first factor in its destruction, and that afterwards wet, frosts, gales, and other external elements had played their part. If, however, we approach the tree more closely we shall discover conspicuous traces of the work of a much more insidious foe than any of these.

like passages in every direction (Fig. 2). Also, we cannot fail to note that the tree possesses a powerful and rank odour; and, if we have freely handled the crumbling wood, our hands, and it may be our clothes, will have acquired this same smell; and so powerful and persistent is it that its presence may be detected for several days afterwards.

2.—A CLOSER VIEW OF A PORTION OF THE SAME TREE, SHOWING HOW THE WOOD IS RIDDLED WITH HOLES.

What light can these observations throw upon the destructive enemy of this once robust and healthy ash tree?

Let us go back a stage, to a time only seven years before, when this ash tree was a fine and beautiful example of its kind, spreading wide its branches clothed with their innumerable compound leaves, and decorating with shifting light and shadow the neighbouring roadside and tiny streamlet. In truth, all was going well with our tree until a particular night in July, a night when there came swiftly flying along this leafy lane a moth—one of the largest of British moths, having grey wings traversed with a network of dark brownish lines.

As the moth neared the ash tree she (for it was a female insect) fluttered towards the earth, and a moment later she had alighted upon the ground near the foot of the tree. Then she moved rapidly towards its trunk, and eventually came to rest upon the bark just above the soil. At all events, she apparently rested, but in truth she was never more busy in her life. By means of a sharp-pointed ovipositor situated at the end of the abdomen she was carefully searching the deepest niches and crevices of the bark (Fig. 3). Then she moved to another part of the bark and carried on very similar movements there. For an hour or more she was occupied with this work, and then she took to her wings again, to visit, it may be, another tree, which she would treat in a like manner.

That was the beginning of the tree's destruction, for the cracks of the bark into which the moth had penetrated with her ovipositor were now crowded with little rounded, greyish-coloured bodies with brown markings. Each of these tiny objects was but very little larger than a pin's head, and curiously grooved about its surface. Some of them, as seen magnified by the writer's pocket-lens, are shown in Fig. 4.

I need hardly add that these curious little objects were the eggs of the moth, which, with true parental instinct, the mother moth had carefully placed in the situation best adapted to the needs of her offspring when hatched.

The tree went on growing and building up new material for future use. In the following spring its innumerable buds responded to the influence of the warm sun, and from them came many new branches bearing in their turn leaves and leaflets. By the following autumn the ash had produced large quantities of its curious winged fruits (familiarly called "keys"), that, on windy days, merrily whirled surprising distances into the neighbouring fields as they fell from the branches. Superficially, everything with our tree was prospering.

3.—THE FEMALE GOAT MOTH (NATURAL SIZE), SEARCHING THE DEEPEST CREVICES OF THE BARK IN ORDER TO DEPOSIT HER EGGS.

4.—THE EGGS SEEN THROUGH A MAGNIFIER.

About this time, however, an entomologist came along the lane, and as he neared the ash he halted and sniffed, and then he muttered "Goats!" Forthwith he began to inspect the various trees in the vicinity, and as he approached one of them he knew at once that he had found the object of his search, for he heard the buzzing of a small host of bluebottle flies as they left a particular tree and took to their wings. The flies, like the entomologist, had been attracted towards the ash by the strong smell. Wasps, hornets, and some of our most handsome butterflies are likewise attracted by this smell, although to man it is repugnant. Indeed, the odour is said to resemble that from the male goat (hence the name "goat moth"); by others it has been compared with that of strong acetic acid, the latter, perhaps, being the more appropriate comparison. The entomologist carefully removed a portion of the bark about a foot above the place where the moth had deposited her eggs during the previous summer. The bark came freely away, and the outside of the young wood was seen to be perforated with many holes, from most of which the juices of the tree were oozing out. No one knew better than the entomologist that the fate of that tree was sealed. He, however, had no thought for the tree itself; instead, he anticipated getting some choice specimens of goat moths for his cabinet, and so he carefully made some entries in his note-book to remind him when to visit the tree again; and then the quarry was left to thrive.

It was not until the spring of the next year that he returned to the tree, about the end of May. Again he removed some of the bark and loose wood, which had now become soft. The perforations were now large and conspicuous, and as he broke away the wood it became more and more obvious that these openings led to irregular ascending galleries, many of which extended upwards to four or five feet within the interior of the trunk. It did not take the entomologist long to expose the cause of these ramifications.

In some of the harder parts of the wood were large, uninviting-looking larvæ, many of them between three and four inches in length and as thick as a man's finger, flesh-coloured at the sides and deep red above. Also, they had wedge-shaped heads, well adapted for penetrating the solid wood on which they were feeding; and when interfered with they had a way of turning angrily round with open jaws as if to bite (Fig. 5). As a matter of fact, however, they are quite harmless, apart from their power to secrete the liquid which produces the rank odour previously referred to, and which, I may remark, requires more than soap and water for its removal from hands and clothes.

5.—LARVA OF THE GOAT MOTH (NATURAL SIZE)—"WHEN INTERFERED WITH THEY HAD A WAY OF TURNING ANGRILY ROUND AS IF TO BITE."

Here, then, was the harvest of those tiny eggs placed upon the tree by the mother moth about a year and ten months before. After a little while from each egg came a baby caterpillar, which penetrated the bark

6.—A LARVA IN ITS COCOON OF WOOD-DUST, IN READINESS TO BECOME A CHRYSALIS.

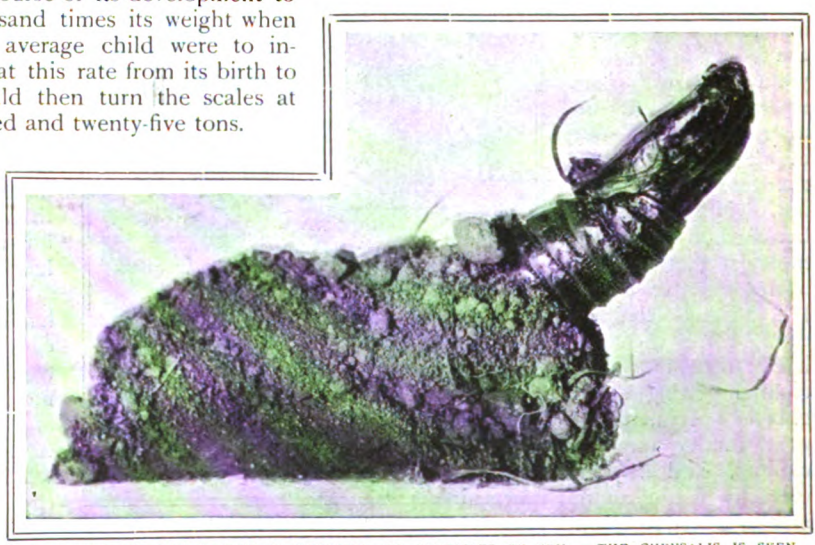
and fed for a time between it and the young wood. In the following spring, however, each of these larvæ commenced its work of running long galleries into the solid wood of the tree, and, as more than a hundred of these larvæ had been engaged upon the work for nearly two years, it is not surprising that some of the topmost branches of the tree had begun to lose vigour, an effect more easily realized when we grasp the fact that each of these larvæ increases in the course of its development to seventy-two thousand times its weight when hatched. If an average child were to increase its weight at this rate from its birth to manhood, it would then turn the scales at about two hundred and twenty-five tons.

Some of the larvæ had by no means reached their full size, and these would feed and burrow into the tree for yet another year. However, many of them had thrived so well at the expense of the tree's substance during the two years, or thereabouts, of their caterpillar life that they were almost ready for the next stage in their development. One, indeed, had already formed its cocoon of "sawdust" and broken bits of wood lightly spun together, and had snugly ensconced itself within (Fig. 6).

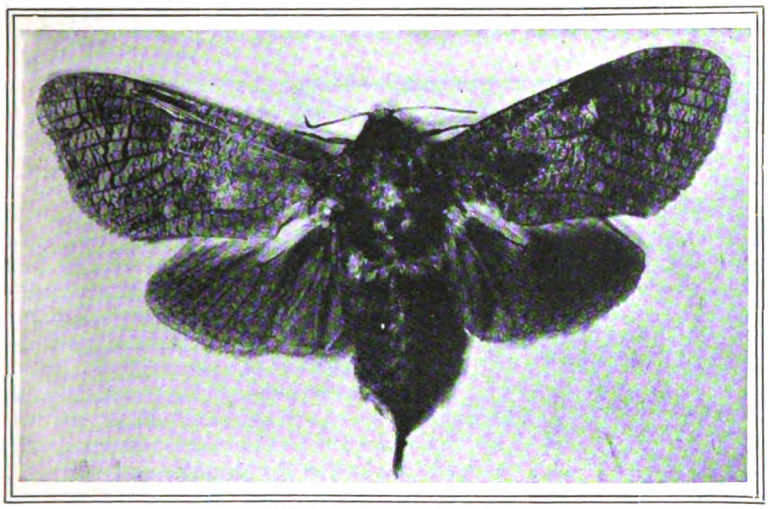
The caterpillar would rest for a day or so as shown in the illustration, and then it would moult its skin. When the skin had slipped off, the caterpillar would be seen to have changed to a large pupa or chrysalis of a reddish-brown colour.

A month later our friend the entomologist would have to keep a sharp look-out for his specimens, for the pupa then would push its way through its cocoon into the burrow and later towards the surface of the decaying and broken bark, near which the cocoon is generally placed. The pupa is perfectly adapted for these movements, being wedge-shaped in front and provided with rows of short spines arranged around each segment of its body to prevent it slipping backwards.

On reaching the surface of the tree the pupa would protrude some two-thirds of its length, and then its skin would break, and so the winged moth become free. The empty pupa-case is left projecting from the hole, numbers of which, in the proper season, may sometimes be seen about the surface of a badly-infested tree. Occasionally, but less often, one of these larvæ pupates in the ground, forming its cocoon of particles of soil; an example of this kind is shown in Fig. 7, where the chrysalis-shell is seen protruding from the cocoon just as it was



7.—SOMETIMES THE COCOON IS COMPOSED OF PARTICLES OF SOIL — THE CHRYSALIS IS SEEN PROTRUDING FROM THE COCOON JUST AFTER THE EMERGENCE OF THE MOTH.



8.—A FEMALE GOAT MOTH, SHOWING THE SHARP INSTRUMENT USED FOR PENETRATING THE BARK WHEN EGG-DEPOSITING.

left after the emergence of the moth, which is shown complete in Fig. 8.

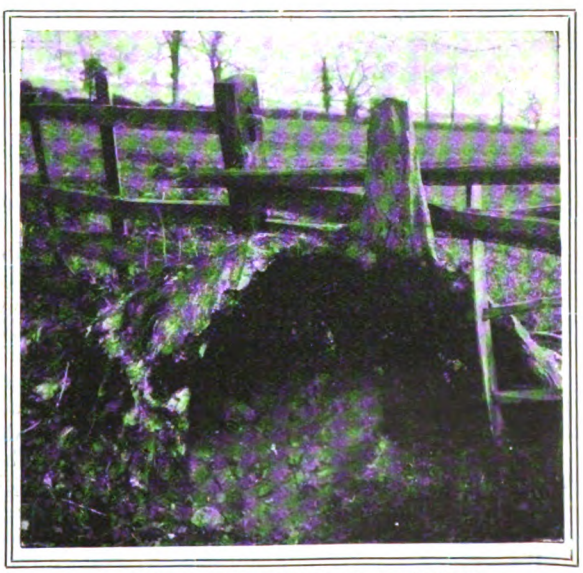
Should the entomologist arrive upon the scene any time within an hour of the moth's emergence from the pupa, he will be sure of his quarry, for it will then be resting upon the bark unfolding and drying its wings ready for flight. By its capture he will render an untold service to the owners of neighbouring trees, for, as I have here shown, one moth may ruin a valuable tree, and then, should all the offspring of that moth reach maturity, we may well ask how many trees will they in their turn destroy?

Fortunately Nature has appointed a few vigilant detectives to keep in check this destructive insect, the most useful of these being an ichneumon fly that deposits its eggs in the bodies of these larvæ, the ultimate result of this action being that the chrysalides of the goat moth produce ichneumon flies instead of their own species, these flies having developed parasitically at the expense of their caterpillar host. Then there is the green woodpecker, which cuts holes in the tree by means of its powerful beak to extract these fleshy larvæ. And as the market value of a good specimen of the goat moth is eightpence or ninepence, the entomologist may be counted as another persistent enemy.

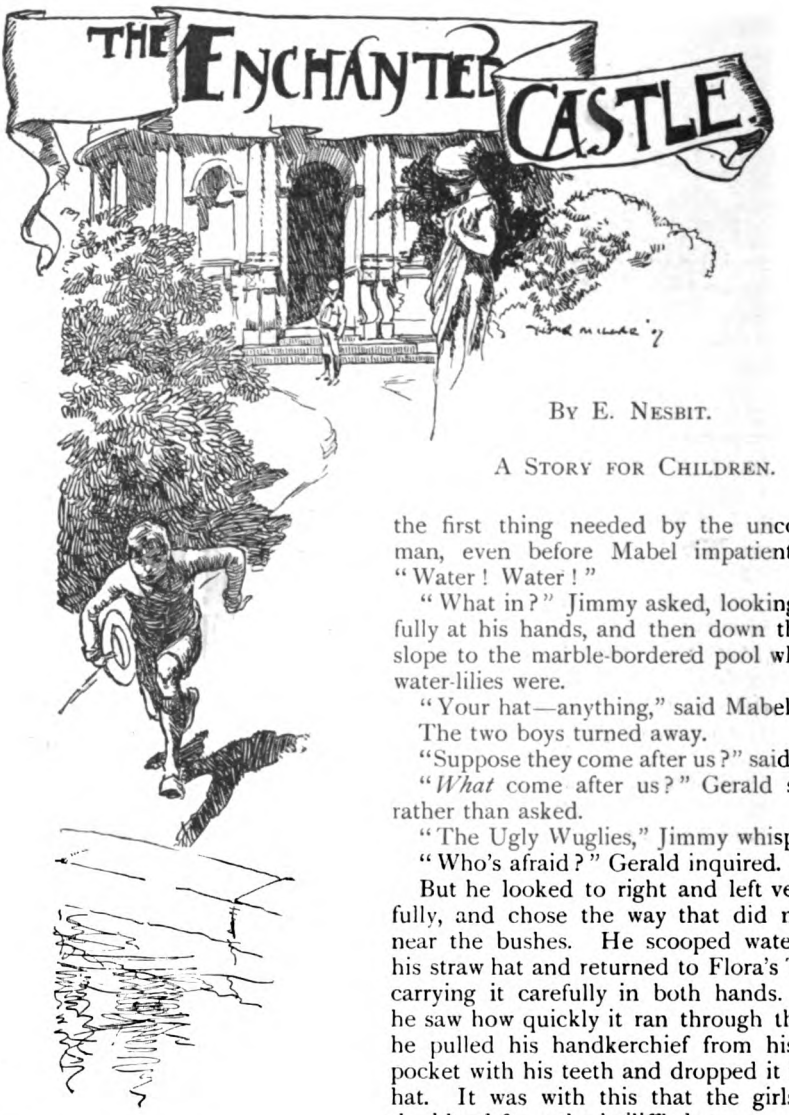
Even with these diligent foes all in harness, during some seasons this destructive insect becomes very abundant, and then standing timber has to suffer, the most healthy trees being the ones attacked. Ash, poplar, willow, walnut, beech, lime, birch, sycamore, and many other trees in their turn become victims; but it is when oak trees are attacked that the most serious loss results.

The moth is fairly abundant throughout Europe and Western Asia, and it is also found in North Africa. In the British Isles this insect is so destructive that the Board of Agriculture have issued a leaflet descriptive of it and describing preventive and remedial measures; this is supplied gratis to applicants.

However, the only method of dealing with badly-infested trees seems to be that of felling and splitting them to destroy the caterpillars lurking within, although this means sacrificing the tree. Even should the enemy be ejected, the rain eventually penetrates the burrows of the larvæ and rots the wood, and then wind and gales do the rest, until the once great tree becomes a thing of the past (Fig. 9).



9.—THE COMPLETED WORK OF THE GOAT MOTH.



By E. Nesbit.

A Story for Children.

CHAPTER VIII.

IT was but too plain. The unfortunate bailiff must have opened the door before the spell had faded, while yet the Ugly Wuglies were something more than mere coats and hats and sticks. They had rushed out upon him, and had done—this. He lay there insensible. The girls had rushed to the sufferer; already his head was in Mabel's lap.

Jimmy and Gerald both knew what was the first thing needed by the unconscious man, even before Mabel impatiently said, "Water! Water!"

"What in?" Jimmy asked, looking doubtfully at his hands, and then down the green slope to the marble-bordered pool where the water-lilies were.

"Your hat—anything," said Mabel.

The two boys turned away.

"Suppose they come after us?" said Jimmy.

"*What* come after us?" Gerald snapped rather than asked.

"The Ugly Wuglies," Jimmy whispered.

"Who's afraid?" Gerald inquired.

But he looked to right and left very carefully, and chose the way that did not lead near the bushes. He scooped water up in his straw hat and returned to Flora's Temple, carrying it carefully in both hands. When he saw how quickly it ran through the straw he pulled his handkerchief from his breast pocket with his teeth and dropped it into the hat. It was with this that the girls wiped the blood from the bailiff's brow.

"He's not dead, is he?" asked Jimmy, anxiously.

"No," Kathleen reassured him; "his heart's beating. Mabel and I felt it in his wrist, where doctors do."

Suddenly a shadow fell on the marble beside them and a voice spoke.

The children looked up—into the face of the eldest of the Ugly Wuglies, the respectable one.

Jimmy and Kathleen screamed. I am sorry, but they did.

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"Hush!" said Gerald, savagely; he was still wearing the ring. "Hold your tongues. I'll get him away."

"Very sad affair, this," said the respectable Ugly Wugly. He spoke with a curious accent; there was something odd about his r's, and his m's and n's were those of a person labouring under an almost intolerable cold in the head. But it was not the dreadful "oo" and "ah" voice of the night before. Kathleen and Jimmy stooped over the bailiff. Even that prostrate form, being human, seemed some little protection. But Gerald, strong in the fearlessness that the ring gave to its wearer, looked full into the face of the Ugly Wugly, and started. For, though the face was almost the same as the face he had himself painted on the school drawing-paper, it was not the same; for it was no longer paper—it was a real face, and the hands, lean and almost transparent as they were, were real hands. As it moved a little to get a better view of the bailiff it was plain that it had legs, arms—live legs and arms—and a self-supporting backbone. It was alive indeed—with a vengeance.

"How did it happen?" Gerald asked, with an effort at calmness—a successful effort.

"Most regrettable," said the Ugly Wugly. "The others must have missed the way last night in the passage. They never found the hotel."

"Did *you?*" asked Gerald, blankly.

"Of course," said the Ugly Wugly. "Most respectable, exactly as you said. Then, when I came away—I didn't come the front way because I wanted to revisit this sylvan scene by daylight and the hotel people didn't seem to know how to direct me to it—I found the others all at this door, very angry. They'd been here all night, trying to get out. Then the door opened—this gentleman must have opened it—and before I could protect him that underbred man in the high hat—you remember——"

Gerald remembered.

"Hit him on the head, and he fell where you see him. The others dispersed, and I myself was just going for assistance when I saw you."

Here Jimmy was discovered to be in tears, and Kathleen white as any drawing-paper.

"What's the matter, my little man?" said the respectable Ugly Wugly, kindly. Jimmy passed instantly from tears to yells.

"Here, take the ring," said Gerald, in a furious whisper, and thrust it on to Jimmy's hot, damp, resisting finger. Jimmy's voice stopped short in the middle of a howl. And Gerald, in a cold flash, realized what it was that Mabel had gone through the night before. But it was daylight, and Gerald was not a coward.

"We must find the others," he said.

"I imagine," said the elderly Ugly Wugly, "that they have gone to bathe. Their clothes are in the wood." He pointed stiffly.

"You two go and see," said Gerald. "I'll go on dabbing this chap's head."

In the wood Jimmy, now fearless as any lion, discovered four heaps of clothing, with broomsticks, hockey-sticks, and masks complete—all that had gone to make up the gentlemen Ugly Wuglies of the night before. On a stone seat, well in the sun, sat the two lady Ugly Wuglies, and Kathleen approached them gingerly. Valour is easier in the sunshine than at night, as we all know. When she and Jimmy came close to the bench they saw that the Ugly Wuglies were only Ugly Wuglies such as they had often made. There was no life in them. Jimmy shook them to pieces, and a sigh of relief burst from Kathleen.

"The spell's broken, you see," she said; "and that old gentleman, he's *real*. He only happens to be like the Ugly Wugly we made."

"He's got the coat-that-hung-in-the-hall on, anyway," said Jimmy.

"No; it's only like it. Let's get back to the unconscious stranger."

They did—and Gerald begged the elderly Ugly Wugly to retire among the bushes with Jimmy, "because," said he, "I think the poor bailiff's coming round, and it might upset him to see strangers—and Jimmy'll keep you company. He's the best one of us to go with you," he added, hastily.

And this, since Jimmy had the ring, was certainly true.

So the two disappeared behind the rhododendrons.

The bailiff opened his eyes. Quite soon he sat up and looked round him. There was an anxious silence.

"I'm all right now," he said, and his eye fell on the blood-stained handkerchief. "I say, I did give my head a bang. And you've been giving me first aid. Thank you most awfully. But it is rum."

"What's rum?" politeness obliged Gerald to ask.

"Well, I suppose it isn't really rum—I expect I saw you just before I fainted, or whatever it was; but I've dreamed the most extraordinary dream while I've been insensible. and you were in it."

"JIMMY SHOOK THEM TO PIECES."

"Nothing but us?" asked Mabel, breathlessly.

"Oh, lots of things—impossible things; but *you* were real enough."

Everyone breathed deeply in relief. It was indeed, as they agreed later, a lucky let-off.

"Are you *sure* you're all right?" they all asked, as he got on his feet.

"Perfectly, thank you." He glanced behind Flora's statue as he spoke. "Do you know, I dreamed there was a door there; but of course there isn't. I don't know how to thank you," he added, looking at them with what the girls called his beautiful kind eyes; "it's lucky for me you came along. You come here whenever you like, you know," he added. "I give you the freedom of the place."

"You're the new bailiff, aren't you?" said Mabel.

"Yes. How did you know?" he asked, quickly; but they did not tell him how they knew. Instead, they found out which way he was going, and went the other way after warm handshakes and hopes on both sides that they would meet again soon.

"Now, *think*," said Gerald—"think as you never thought before—how to get rid of that Ugly Wugly."

Everyone thought, but their brains were tired with anxiety and distress, and the thoughts they thought were, as Mabel said, not worth thinking, let alone saying.

"I suppose Jimmy's all right?" said Kathleen, anxiously.

"Oh, *he's* all right; he's got the ring," said Gerald.

"I hope he won't go wishing anything silly," said Mabel, but Gerald urged her to shut up and let him think.

"I think I think best sitting down," he said, and sat; "and sometimes you can think best aloud. The Ugly Wugly's *real*, don't make any mistake about that. And he got made real inside that passage. If we could get him back there he might get changed again, and then we could take the coats and things back."

"Isn't there any other way?" Kathleen asked; and Mabel, more candid, said, bluntly, "I'm not going into that passage, so there!"

"Anyway," said Gerald, "we'll try to get him back and shut the door. And he's not horrid now; *really* he isn't. He's real, you see. Come on."

He took a hand of each, and they walked resolutely towards the bank of rhododendrons behind which Jimmy and the Ugly Wugly had been told to wait.

As they neared the bushes the shining leaves rustled, shivered, and parted, and before the girls had time to begin to hang back Jimmy came blinking out into the sunlight. The boughs closed behind him, and they did not stir or rustle for the appearance of anyone else. Jimmy was alone.

"Where is it?" asked the girls in one breath.

"Walking up and down in a fir-walk," said Jimmy, "doing sums in a book. He says he's most frightfully rich, and he's got to get up to town to the Stocks or something—where they change papers into gold if you're clever, he says. I should like to go to the Stockschange, wouldn't you?"

"I don't seem to care very much about changes," said Gerald. "I've had enough. Show us where he is—we must get rid of him."

"He's got a motor-car," Jimmy went on, parting the warm, varnished-looking rhododendron leaves, "and a garden with a tennis-court and a lake, and a carriage and pair, and he goes to Egypt for his holiday sometimes, just like other people go to Margate."

"The best thing," said Gerald, following through the bushes, "will be to tell him the shortest way out is through that hotel that he thinks he found last night. Then we get him into the passage, give him a push, fly back, and shut the door."

"He'll starve to death in there," said Kathleen, "if he's really real."

"I expect it doesn't last long—the ring magics don't. Anyway, it's the only thing I can think of."

"He's frightfully rich," Jimmy went on, unheeding, amid the crackling of the bushes "He's building a public library for the people where he lives, and having his portrait painted to put in it. He thinks they'll like that."

The belt of rhododendrons was passed, and the children had reached a smooth grass walk bordered by tall fir trees of strange, different kinds. "He's just round that corner," said Jimmy. "He's simply rolling in money. He doesn't know what to do with it. He's been building a horse-trough and drinking-fountain with a bust of himself on top. Why doesn't he build a private swimming-bath close to his bed, so that he can just roll off into it of a morning? I wish *I* was rich—I'd soon show him——"

"That's a sensible wish," said Gerald. "I wonder we didn't think of doing that. Oh, crikey!" he added, and with reason. For there, in the green shadows of the pine-walk, in the woodland silence, broken only by rustling leaves and the agitated breathing of the three unhappy others, Jimmy got his wish. By quick but perfectly plain-to-be-seen degrees Jimmy became rich. And the horrible thing was that, though they could see it happening, they did not know what was happening, and could not have stopped it if they had. All they could see was Jimmy—their own Jimmy, whom they had larked with and quarrelled with and made it up with ever since they could remember—continuously and horribly growing old. The whole thing was over in a few seconds. Yet in those few seconds they saw him grow to a youth, a young man, a middle-aged man; and then, with a sort of shivering shock, unspeakably horrible and definite, he seemed to settle down into an elderly gentleman, handsomely but rather dowdily dressed, who was looking down at them through spectacles and asking them the nearest way to the railway station. If they had not seen the change take place—in all its awful details—they would never have guessed that this stout, prosperous, elderly gentleman, with the high hat, the frock-coat, and the large red seal dangling from the curve of a portly waistcoat, was their own Jimmy. But, as it was, they knew the dreadful truth.

"Oh, Jimmy, *don't!*" cried Mabel, desperately.

Gerald said, "This is perfectly beastly," and Kathleen broke into wild weeping.

"Don't cry, little girl," said That-which-had-been-Jimmy. Let us call him "That"—short for "That-which-had-been-Jimmy."

"What *are* we to do?" whispered Mabel, awestruck; and aloud she said: "Oh, Mr. James, or whatever you call yourself, *do* give me the ring." For on That's finger the fatal ring showed plain.

"Certainly not," said That, firmly. "You appear to be a very grasping child."

"But what are you going to *do?*" Gerald asked, in the flat tones of complete hopelessness.

"Your interest is very complimentary," said That. "Will you tell me, or won't you, the way to the nearest railway station?"

"No," said Gerald; "we won't."

"Then," said That, still politely, though quite plainly furious, "perhaps you'll tell me the way to the nearest lunatic asylum?"

"Oh, no, no, no!" cried Kathleen. "You're not so bad as that."

"Perhaps not. But *you* are," That retorted: "if you're not lunatics you're idiots. However, I see a gentleman ahead who is perhaps sane. In fact, I seem to recognise him."

A gentleman indeed was now to be seen approaching. It was the elderly Ugly Wugly.

"Oh, don't you remember Jerry," Kathleen cried, "and Cathy—your own Cathy, Puss Cat? Dear, dear Jimmy, *don't* be so silly."

"Little girl," said That, looking at her crossly through his spectacles, "I am sorry you have not been better brought up." And he walked stiffly towards the Ugly Wugly.

Two hats were raised, a few words were exchanged, and two elderly figures walked side by side down the green pine-walk, followed by three miserable children, horrified, bewildered, alarmed, and, what is really worse than anything, quite at their wits' end.

"He wished to be rich; so, of course, he is," said Gerald; "he'll have money for tickets and everything."

"And when the spell breaks — it's sure to break, isn't it?—he'll find himself somewhere awful—perhaps in a really good hotel, and not know how he got there."

"I wonder how long the Ugly Wuglies lasted?" said Mabel.

"Yes," Gerald answered, "that reminds me. You two *must* collect the coats and things. Hide them, anywhere you like, and I'll carry them home to-morrow. If there *is* any to-morrow," he added, darkly.

"TWO HATS WERE RAISED."

"Oh, don't," said Kathleen, once more breathing heavily, on the verge of tears; "you wouldn't think everything *could* be so awful, and the sun shining like it does."

"Look here," said Gerald, "of course I must stick to Jimmy. You two must go home to mademoiselle and tell her Jimmy and I have gone off in the train with a gentleman—say he looked like an uncle. He does—some kinds of uncle. There'll be a beastly row afterwards, but it's got to be done."

He started to run, for the girls had lagged, and the Ugly Wugly and That (late Jimmy) had quickened their pace.

The girls were left looking after them.

"We've *got* to find these clothes," said Mabel—"simply got to. I used to want to be a heroine. It's different when it really comes to being, isn't it?"

"Yes—very," said Kathleen. "Where shall we hide the clothes when we've got them? No—not that passage."

"Never," said Mabel, firmly; "we'll hide them inside the great stone dinosaurus out in the grounds. He's hollow."

"He comes alive — in his stone," said Kathleen.

"Not in the sunshine, he doesn't," Mabel told her, confidently, "and not without the ring."

"There won't be any apples and books to-day," said Kathleen.

"No; but we'll do the babiest thing we *can* do the minute we get home. We'll have a doll's tea-party. That'll make us feel as if there wasn't really any magic."

"It'll have to be a very strong-tea party, then," said Kathleen, doubtfully.

And now we see Gerald, a small but quite determined figure, paddling along in the soft white dust of the sunny road, in the wake of two elderly gentlemen. His hand, in his trousers pocket, buries itself with a feeling of satisfaction in the heavy mixed coinage that is his share of the profits of his conjuring at the fair. His noiseless tennis-shoes bear him to the station, where, unobserved, he listens at the ticket office to the voice of That which was James. "One first, London," it says; and Gerald, waiting till That and the Ugly Wugly have strolled on to the platform, politely conversing of politics and the Kaffir Market, takes a third return to London. The train comes in, squeaking and puffing. The watched take their seats in a carriage blue-lined. The watcher springs into a yellow wooden compartment. A whistle sounds—a flag is waved. The train pulls itself together, strains, jerks, and starts.

"I don't understand," says Gerald, alone in his third-class carriage, "how

railway trains and magic *can* go on at the same time."

And yet they do.

Mabel and Kathleen, nervously peering among the rhododendron bushes and the bracken and the fancy fir trees, find six several heaps of coats, hats, skirts, gloves, golf-clubs, hockey-sticks, broom-handles. They carry them, panting and damp, for the midday sun is pitiless, up the hill to where the stone dinosaurus looms immense among a forest of larches. The dinosaurus has a hole in his stomach. Mabel shows Kathleen how to "make a back," and climbs up on it into the cold, stony inside of the monster. Kathleen hands up the clothes and the sticks.

"There's lots of room," says Mabel; "its

"KATHLEEN HANDS UP THE CLOTHES AND THE STICKS."

tail goes down into the ground. It's like a secret passage."

"Suppose something comes out of it and jumps out at you?" says Kathleen, and Mabel hurriedly descends.

Gerald was lurking—there really is no other word for it—on the staircase of Aldermanbury Buildings, Old Broad Street. On the floor below him was a door bearing the legend, "Mr. U. W. Ugli, Stock and Share Broker. And at the Stock Exchange," and on the floor above was another door, on which was the name of Gerald's little brother, now grown suddenly rich in so magic and tragic a way. There were no explaining words under Jimmy's name. Gerald could not guess what walk in life it was to which That (which had been Jimmy) owed its affluence. He had seen, when the door opened to admit his brother, a tangle of clerks and mahogany desks. Evidently That had a large business.

What was Gerald to do? What *could* he do?

It is almost impossible, especially for one so young as Gerald, to enter a large London office and explain that the elderly and respected head of it is not what he seems, but is really your little brother who has been suddenly advanced to age and wealth by a tricky wishing-ring. If you think it's a possible thing, try it, that's all. Nor could he knock at the door of Mr. U. W. Ugli, Stock and Share Broker (and at the Stock Exchange), and inform *his* clerks that their chief was really nothing but old clothes that had accidentally come alive, and by some magic which he couldn't attempt to explain become real during a night spent at a really good hotel which had no existence.

The situation bristled, as you see, with difficulties; and it was so long past Gerald's proper dinner-time that his increasing hunger was rapidly growing to seem the most important difficulty of all. It is quite possible to starve to death on the staircase of a London building if the people you are watching for only stay long enough in their offices. The truth of this came home to Gerald more and more painfully.

A boy with hair like a new front-door mat came whistling up the stairs. He had a dark blue bag in his hands.

"I'll give you a tanner if you'll get me a tanner's worth of buns," said Gerald, with that prompt decision common to all great commanders.

"Show us yer tanners," the boy rejoined, with at least equal promptness. Gerald showed them.

"All right; hand over."

"Payment on delivery," said Gerald, using words from the drapers which he had never thought to use.

The boy grinned admiringly.

"Knows 'is wy abaht," he said; "ain't no flies on 'im."

"Not many," Gerald owned, with modest pride. "Cut along, there's a good chap. I've *got* to wait here. I'll take care of your bag if you like."

"Nor yet there ain't no flies on me neither," remarked the boy, shouldering it. "I've been up to the confidence trick for years—ever since I was your age."

With this parting shot he went, returning in due course bun-laden. Gerald gave the sixpence and took the buns. When the boy, a minute later, emerged from the door of Mr. U. W. Ugli, Stock and Share Broker (and at the Stock Exchange), Gerald stopped him.

"What sort of chap's that?" he asked, pointing the question with a jerk of an explaining thumb.

"Awful big pot," said the boy; "up to his eyes in oof. Motor and all that."

"Know anything about the one on the next landing?"

"He's bigger than what this one is. Very old firm—special cellar in the Bank of England to put his chink in. All in bins, like against the wall at the cornchandler's. Jiminy! I wouldn't mind 'alf an hour in there, and the doors open and the police away at a beano. Not much, neither. You'll bust if you eat all them buns."

"Have one?" Gerald responded, and held out the bag.

"They say in our office," said the boy, paying for the bun honourably with unasked information, "as these two is all for cutting each other's throats—oh, only in the way of business. Been at it for years."

Gerald wildly wondered what magic and how much had been needed to give history and a past to these two things of yesterday, the rich Jimmy and the Ugly Wugly. If he could get them away, would all memory of them fade—in this boy's mind, for instance, in the minds of all the people who did business with them in the City? Would the mahogany-and-clerk-furnished offices fade away? Were the clerks real? Was the mahogany? Was he himself real? Was the boy?

"Can you keep a secret?" he asked the other boy. "Are you on for a lark?"

"I ought to be getting back to the office," said the boy.

"Get, then," said Gerald.

"Don't you get stuffy," said the boy. "I was just a-going to say it didn't matter. I know how to make my nose bleed if I'm a bit late."

Gerald congratulated him on this accomplishment, at once so useful and so graceful, and then said:—

"Look here. I'll give you five bob. Honest."

"What for?" was the boy's natural question.

"If you'll help me."

"Fire ahead, then."

"'I'M A PRIVATE INQUIRY,' SAID GERALD."

"I'm a private inquiry," said Gerald.

"'Tec? You don't look it."

"What's the good of being one if you look it?" Gerald asked, impatiently, beginning on another bun. "That old chap on the floor above—he's *wanted*."

"Police?" asked the boy, with fine carelessness.

"No—sorrowing relations."

"Return to," said the boy; "all forgotten and forgiven. I see."

"And I've got to get him to them, somehow. Now, if you could go in and give him a message from someone who wanted to meet him on business——"

"Hold on," said the boy. "I know a trick worth two of that. You go in and see old Ugli. He'd give his ears to have the old boy out of the way for a day or two. They were saying so in our office only this morning."

Gerald finished the last bun.

"You're right," he said. "I'll chance it. Here's your five bob."

He brushed the bun crumbs from his front, cleared his throat, and knocked at the door of Mr. U. W. Ugli. It opened and he entered.

The door-mat boy lingered, secure in his power to account for his long absence by means of his well-trained nose, and his waiting was rewarded. He went down a few steps, round the bend of the stairs, and heard the voice of Mr. U. W. Ugli, so well known on that staircase (and on the Stock Exchange), say in soft, cautious accents :—

"Then I'll ask him to let me look at the ring—and I'll drop it. You pick it up. But, remember, it's a pure accident, and you don't know me. I can't have my name mixed up in a thing like this. You're *sure* he's really unhinged?"

"Quite," said Gerald; "he's quite mad about that ring. He'll follow it anywhere. I know he will. And think of his sorrowing relations."

"I do—I do," said Mr. Ugli, kindly; "that's all I *do* think of, of course."

He went up the stairs to the other office, and Gerald heard the voice of That telling his clerks that he was going out to lunch. Then the horrible Ugly Wugly, and Jimmy, hardly less horrible in the eyes of Gerald, passed down the stairs where, in the dusk of the lower landing, two boys were making themselves as undistinguished as possible, and so out into the street, talking of stocks and shares and bears and bulls. The two boys followed.

"I say," the doormat-headed boy whispered, admiringly, "whatever are you up to?"

"You'll see," said Gerald, recklessly. "Come on."

"I say, you aren't going into this swell place; you *can't*." The boy paused, appalled at the majesty of Pimm's.

"Yes, I am; they can't turn us out as long as we behave. You come along too. I'll stand lunch."

I don't know why Gerald clung so to this boy. He wasn't a very nice boy. Perhaps it was because he was the only person Gerald knew in London to speak to, except That-which-had-been-Jimmy and the Ugly Wugly; and he did not want to talk to either of them.

What happened next happened so quickly that, as Gerald said later, it was "just like magic." The restaurant was crowded—busy men were hastily bolting the food hurriedly brought by busy waiters. There was the clink of forks and plates, with the gurgle of beer from bottles, the hum of talk, and the smell of many good things to eat.

"Two chops, please," Gerald had just said, playing with a plainly-shown handful of money, so as to leave no doubt of his honourable intentions. Then, at the next table, he heard the words: "Ah, yes; curious old family heirloom," the ring was drawn off the finger of That, and Mr. U. W. Ugli, murmuring something about a unique curio, reached his impossible hand out for it. And then the ring slipped from the hand of Mr. U. W. Ugli and skidded along the floor. Gerald pounced on it like a greyhound on a hare. He thrust the dull circlet on his finger and cried out aloud in that crowded place:—

"I wish Jimmy and I were inside that door behind the statue of Flora."

It was the only safe place he could think of.

The lights and sounds and scents of the restaurant died away as a wax-drop dies in fire—a rain-drop in water. I don't know, and Gerald never knew, what happened in that restaurant. In place of the light there was darkness; in place of the sounds there was silence; and in place of the scent of beef, pork, mutton, fish, veal, cabbage, onions, carrots, beer, and tobacco, there was the musty, damp scent of a place underground that has been long shut up.

Gerald felt sick and giddy, and there was something at the back of his mind that he knew would make him feel sicker and giddier as soon as he should have the sense to remember what it was. Meantime it was important to think of proper words to soothe the City man that had once been Jimmy—to keep him quiet till Time, like a spring uncoiling, should bring the reversal of the spell—make all things as they were and as they ought to be. But he fought in vain for words. There were none. Nor were they needed. For through the deep darkness came a voice—and it was not the voice of that City man who had been Jimmy, but the voice of that very Jimmy who was Gerald's little brother, and who had wished that unlucky wish for riches that could only be answered by changing all that was Jimmy, young and poor, to all that Jimmy, rich and old, would have been. Another voice said: "Jerry! Jerry! Are you awake? I've had such a rum dream."

And then there was a moment when nothing was said or done.

Gerald felt through the thick darkness,

"HE CRIED OUT ALOUD IN THAT CROWDED PLACE: 'I WISH JIMMY AND I WERE INSIDE THAT DOOR BEHIND THE STATUE OF FLORA.'"

and the thick silence, and the thick scent of old earth shut up, and he got hold of Jimmy's hand.

"It's all right, Jimmy, old chap," he said; "it's not a dream now. It's that beastly ring again. I had to wish us here to get you back at all out of your dream."

"Wish us where?" Jimmy held on to the hand in a way that, in the daylight of life, he would have been the first to call babyish.

"Inside the passage—behind the Flora statue," said Gerald, adding, "It's all right, really."

"Oh, I dare say it's all right," Jimmy answered through the dark, with an irritation not strong enough to make him loosen his hold of his brother's hand. "*But how are we going to get out?*"

Then Gerald knew what it was that was waiting to make him feel more sick and more giddy than the lightning flight from Cheapside to Yalding Towers had been able to make him. But he said, stoutly:—

"I'll wish us out, of course," though all the time he knew that the ring would not undo its given wishes.

It didn't.

Gerald wished. He handed the ring carefully to Jimmy through the thick darkness, and Jimmy wished.

And there they still were, in that black passage behind Flora, that had led—in the case of one Ugly Wugly, at least—to "a good hotel." And the stone door was shut. And they did not know even which way to turn to it.

"If only I had some matches!" said Gerald.

"Why didn't you leave me in the dream?" Jimmy almost whimpered. "It was light there, and I was just going to have salmon and cucumber."

"I," rejoined Gerald, in gloom, "was just going to have a chop and fried potatoes."

The silence and the darkness and the earthy scent were all they had now.

"I always wondered what it would be like," said Jimmy, in low, even tones, "to be buried alive. And now I know! Oh!" his voice suddenly rose to a shriek, "it isn't true; it isn't! It's a dream—that's what it is!"

There was a pause while you could have counted ten. Then——

"Yes," said Gerald, bravely, through the scent and the silence and the darkness, "it's just a dream, Jimmy, old chap. We'll just hold on, and call out now and then just for the lark of the thing. But it's really only a dream, of course."

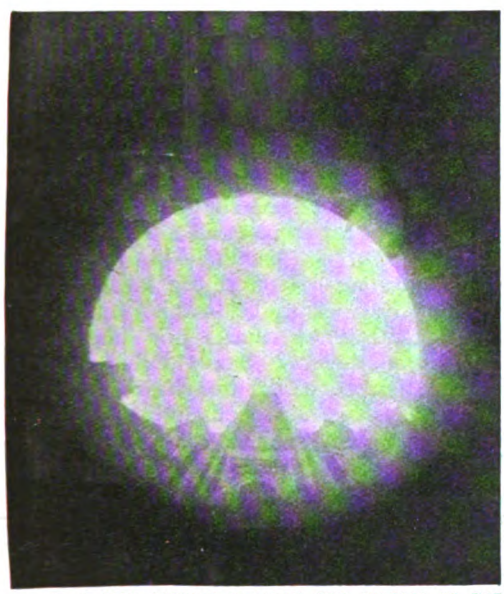
"Of course," said Jimmy, in the silence and the darkness and the scent of old earth.

(*To be continued.*)

FISH-EYE VIEWS.

By W. Oliver Wilson.

EVERYONE has observed how objects under water seem distorted, especially when looked at obliquely; but how many have thought much, if at all, about how objects outside appear when viewed by an eye under water? Unfortunately we cannot see this by dipping our heads under water, as then it is found that vision is extremely indistinct. With very simple apparatus, however, some interesting photographs can be obtained indicating how fish and other aquatic animals would view the outside world.



1.—TO A FISH LOOKING THROUGH THE SURFACE OF THE WATER THE FRONT OF A BUILDING APPEARS CONCAVE AND MUCH SHORTER THAN IT REALLY IS.

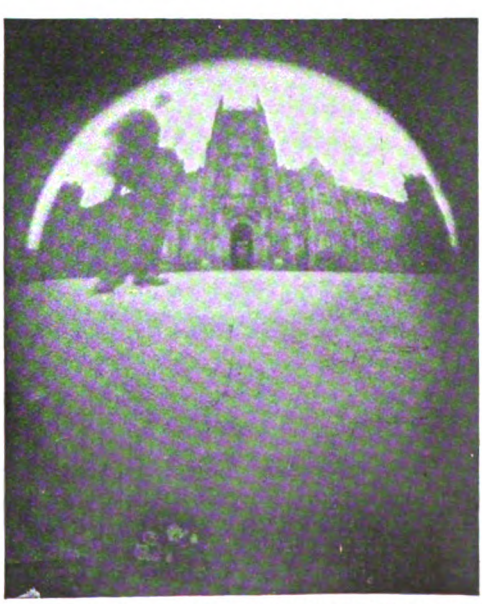
The photographs here reproduced were taken with a camera consisting of an ordinary Colman's mustard tin filled with water and placed in a cubical glass trough, also filled with water. As a pin-hole gives better results than a lens and obviates the difficulty of focusing, such an aperture was made about the centre of one side of the tin. This can be conveniently kept closed by a pin before and after exposure. The inner surface having been varnished dead black to prevent reflection from the sides, the tin required no further alteration. A rubber band stretched round the margin of the lid served to prevent leakage of light. The mustard tin is exactly the width of a quarter-plate, and holds it in position at a suitable distance from the pin-hole—about an inch and a quarter.

Inserting the plate in a dark room, the tin, or camera, as we may call it, is immersed in the trough, care being taken that no air-bubbles adhere to the plate. We are now ready to commence operations. From two to three minutes' exposure with a "Special Rapid" plate is sufficient.

The first photograph represents the appearance Queen's College, Belfast, would present to a fish placed in a bucket of water about ten yards in front of the main entrance. The front of this building is in reality not curved, but to a fish looking through the surface of water it seems concave, and looks very much shorter than it actually is.

Straight banks on a stream seem curved in a similar manner, and hence a fish must think it is in a basin of the river. This imaginary basin always seems widest at the place where the fish is, and thus, as the latter swims down the river, the banks must appear to open out in front and close in behind.

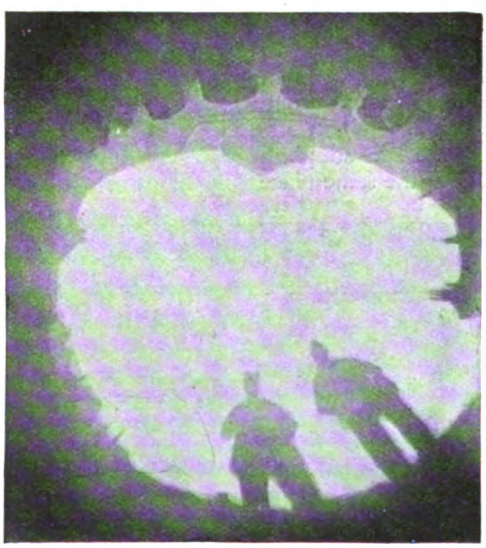
The second photograph was taken from about the same place, but the camera looked



2.—THE SAME VIEW AS SEEN BY A FISH LOOKING THROUGH THE GLASS SIDE OF A TANK.

out through the side of the trough. This is analogous to a fish looking out of an aquarium In this case the building seems curved round, so as to be convex towards the point of view both from side to side and up and down. In addition to this it gives the idea of being much more distant than in the first case, the foreground being enormously magnified in proportion to the rest and the length considerably diminished. Judging from the shape of the building, it is plain that people walking along an aquarium must seem to the creatures within to walk in a similar curve. The two figures seen in the photograph were

3.—HOW A FISH SEES A MAN STANDING CLOSE TO THE EDGE OF THE WATER.



4.—A TYPICAL PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN UNDER WATER, SHOWING THE SKY IN THE CENTRE, THE LANDSCAPE ARRANGED IN A CIRCLE ALL ROUND IT, AND OUTSIDE THAT AGAIN A CIRCLE OF OBJECTS UNDER THE WATER SEEN BY A REFLECTION IN THE SURFACE.

standing quite close to the apparatus, the near one being less than a foot from touching the trough and about the same distance to the side. The one farther away is in reality slightly taller, but the height of the near one is more exaggerated, especially his legs.

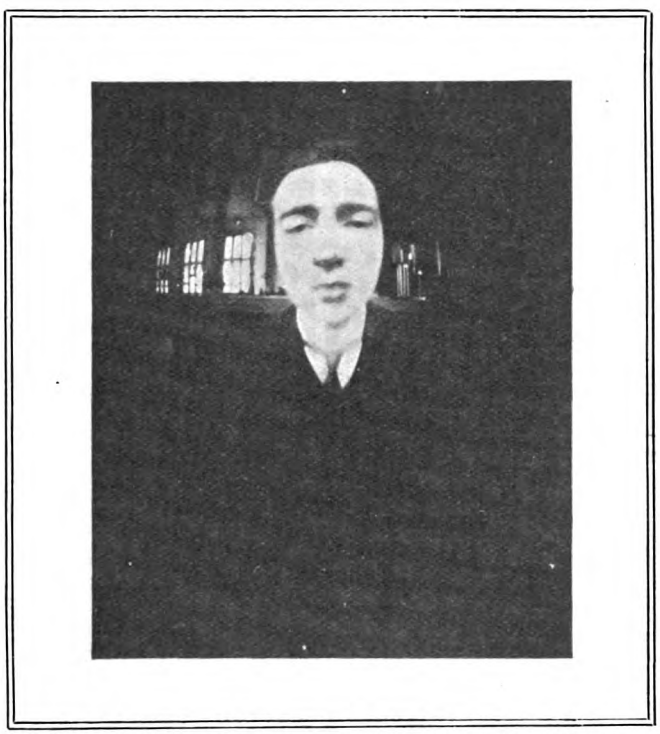
The figure in the third picture was standing quite close also, but here again the camera was directed upwards. Compare the size of the head with the hands and legs.

The fourth photograph was taken in a similar way, and shows better how much can be included in the field of view at once—*i.e.*, everything visible from the surface of the water. A typical photograph taken in this way should show the sky in the centre with the landscape arranged in a circle around it; outside that again a circle of objects under the water should be seen by reflection in the surface, but this is not at all easy to secure. The pillars of the building shown in this photograph are cut off at the level of the water, and everything below this would have been dark had the camera not been in a transparent trough. Some light coming through the side of the trough was reflected from the surface all round, and, the figures being near, a diffuse shadow is cast by their legs. This is better shown in the case

5.—A THERMOMETER-TUBE PLACED OBLIQUELY IN WATER, SHOWING HOW SUCH OBJECTS APPEAR TO A FISH TO BE BROKEN IN TWO.

of the one to the left because the light was more directly behind him.

The fifth photograph looks at first sight uninteresting, but it illustrates one of the most peculiar effects produced by refraction. It represents a thermometer-tube placed obliquely, partly in water. The camera was directed horizontally and placed so that the pin-hole was about a quarter of an inch below the surface and four inches from the thermometer. The lowest portion in the photograph is the immersed part seen directly through the water. The upper portion (also seen against a white background) is in air, and appears considerably elevated, owing to the bending of the rays of light as they enter the water. The thermometer, therefore, seems broken into two pieces. It will be observed that the lower end of the upper portion, being, in reality, adjacent to the upper end of the lower portion, lies vertically above it. But where does the middle piece come in? This is the reflection of the lower portion, the surface of the water acting as a mirror. It is exactly similar to the lower portion inverted, as is seen by the position of the bulb. The dark background against which the reflection lies is the surface of the water seen from below, and the white background is the side of the trough, which also seems broken in two. From this we may draw the inference that the banks of rivers and lakes appear similarly cleft along the water-line. What about the angler, too, who wades into the river? He must have his legs apparently severed from his body, as well as being distorted as in the third photograph. He will have an advantage in one respect, for his fly projecting slightly through the water will appear to the fish completely disconnected from the line—at least, the part below the surface will.



6.—A PERSON LOOKING INTO AN AQUARIUM, AS HE APPEARS TO A FISH.

The last photograph reproduced does not represent a model, but a human being. The face was about two inches from the glass side of the vessel, and the camera was directed horizontally at about the level of his nose. This is exactly as the person in question presents himself to a fish when he looks into an aquarium.

CURIOSITIES.

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

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CLEVER PAPER WORK.

THE basket of flowers shown in the photograph does not represent a basket of real flowers, as may be at first supposed, but every flower therein is made of paper. Not only are the flowers made of paper, but the basket itself is woven of the same material by twisting the paper into long strips plaited together—a process which takes a great deal of time and patience. The details are so perfect that even the small brown leaf, which is seen at the back of a daffodil, imitates the ravages of time. The basket and its contents were made by two lady friends of mine in their spare time, and show how odd moments can be profitably employed.—Mr. S. Grey, 60, Amwell Street, E.C.

THE PILLARS OF INTEGRITY.

THE following picture was taken in the mosque of Amru. in Old Cairo, about three miles from the town of Cairo. The mosque is held in great veneration, as it is the oldest mosque in Cairo, and it is an exact reproduction of the Mecca mosque. The pair of columns in the picture are known as the "Needle's Eye," and there is a tradition that only men of the highest integrity can squeeze through. The space was filled up by Ismail's orders, as he saw at a glance that his portly form could not stand the

test. Now, however, the wall has been taken down again, and our Arab guide showed us that he was able to get through easily, "as he was a good man"!—Miss E. M. Stear, P.O. Box 787, Cairo.

PIPES FROM THE RUINS OF SAN FRANCISCO.

THE pile of scrap-iron here shown is made up entirely of small pipes taken from the ruins of San Francisco's burned district. It is nearly twenty feet high and about sixty feet long, containing the pipes from thousands of burned buildings, large and small.—Mr. Louis J. Stellmann, Care Press Club, San Francisco.

Hearts—King, knave, 3, 2.
Clubs—King, 10, 6, 3.
Diamonds—
Spades—Ace, knave, 6, 5, 2.

Hearts—6, 5, 4.
Clubs—Knave, 8, 7.
Diamonds—King, 10, 9, 8, 5, 4.
Spades—9.

A
Y Z
B

Hearts—Queen, 9, 7.
Clubs—Queen, 9, 4.
Diamonds—Knave, 3, 2.
Spades—Queen, 10, 8, 7.

Hearts—Ace, 10, 8.
Clubs—Ace, 5, 2.
Diamonds—Ace, queen, 7, 6.
Spades—King, 4, 3.

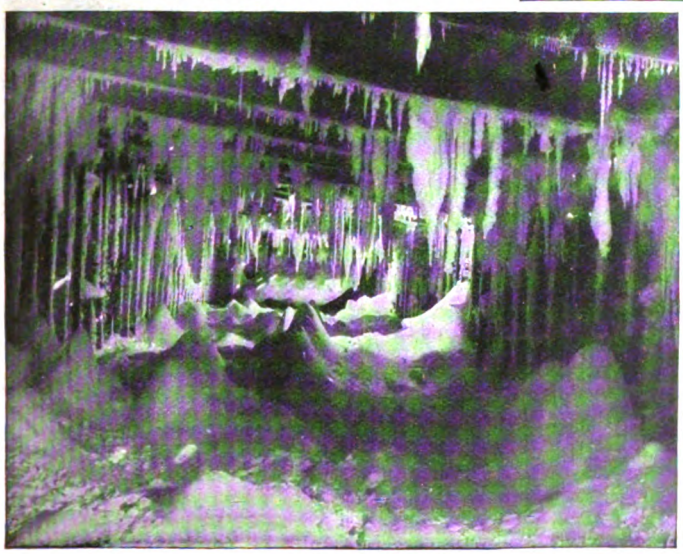
Hearts are trumps. Y led the 9 of spades. How many tricks can A B make against any defence of Y Z, the position of every card being known?

ANOTHER BRIDGE PROBLEM.

"THE Best Bridge Problem Ever Invented," which we published in our May number, excited so much interest and brought us so many letters that we are glad to be able to follow it up with the accompanying problem, which occurred in actual play, and for which we are indebted to Captain Browning ("Slambo"), the well-known bridge editor of the *Westminster Gazette*. We shall publish the solution in our September number. Captain Browning's letter is as follows: "I enclose a complete hand that actually occurred at the game, which was curious in more respects than one from a bridge-player's point of view. In the first place B, the dealer, passed the declaration to his partner, A, by error. A declared hearts trumps, and Y led his single spade, the 9. The hand, for various reasons, caused great discussion, so each hand was put on the table and the hand replayed. The point then arose as to how many tricks A and B could make against any defence of Y and Z. They all agreed on this point, yet all (good players though they were) were wrong. So perhaps it would amuse your readers to try, and I venture to say very few will arrive at the correct solution."

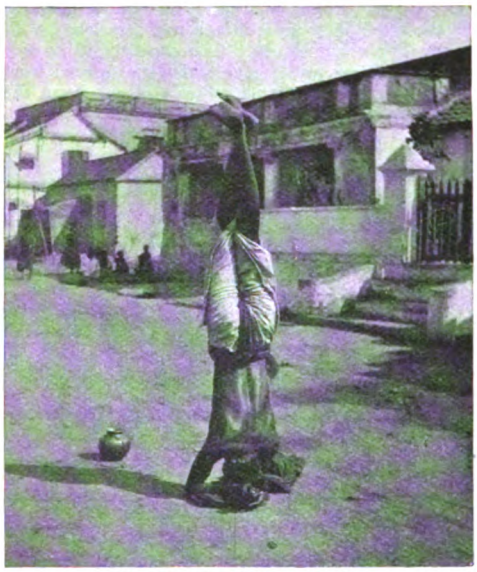
A SKATING RINK IN A BLIZZARD.

MY son, W. S., sends me a remarkable photograph from Arcola, N.W.T., Canada. It represents the Arcola Skating Rink after a blizzard, which shifted the boards of the roof somewhat, with the startling result shown. The snow found its way into the building, while huge stalactites formed from the roof to meet the stalagmites that rise from the floor in weird and fantastic mounds.—Mr. J. C. P. Widdup, 170, Earl's Court Road, South Kensington.



THE ORDEAL OF A CABBY BRIDEGROOM.

EDINBURGH cabbies have a way of their own in celebrating the marriage of a fellow-whip. The occasion is one of good-humoured banter, and affords ample scope for the ingenuity and artistic tastes of drivers. The one about to become a Benedict has not only to suffer chaff, but his effigy and that of his bride must needs be exhibited to the vulgar gaze of the public. The dummies are fearfully and wonderfully made, as a rule, and are securely perched on the "shelter" connected with the bridegroom's rank. The most recent of these displays is seen in this photograph. It was adorned with Chinese lanterns at night. —Mr. G. Eskdale, 1, Murieston Crescent, Edinburgh. Photo. by Mr. Ernest J. Whiteley, 41, Dean Park, Edinburgh.

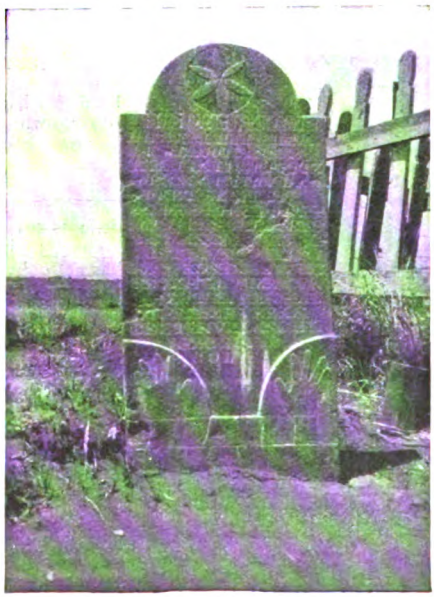


AN ACROBATIC BEGGAR.

THIS photograph of a native begging in the street was taken in Madras. He remains in this position for several hours, hoping to receive some reward from passers-by, for which purpose he has placed his vessel before his eyes in front of him.—Mr. Oscar Ramsay Unger, 5, Dorset Road, Merton Park, S.W.

"HANDS UP!"

I AM forwarding herewith a photograph of a tombstone on a grave on a kopje near Heidelberg, Transvaal. I was told that the Boer who is buried there surrendered during the late war, and his relatives were so incensed at this that they put the tombstone above him when he died.—Mr. C. H. Shattock, Box 1193, Johannesburg, Transvaal.



HER ONE HUNDRED AND SECOND KITTEN!

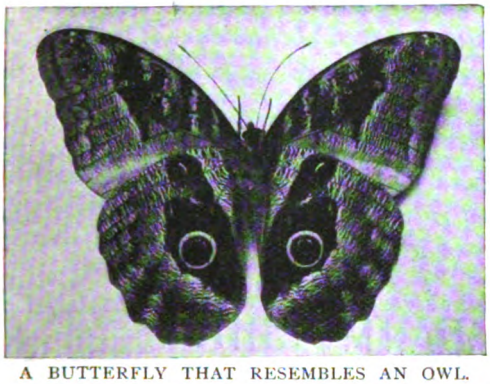
MY dear old cat has only quite recently given birth to her one hundred and second kitten, and both it and its brother, No. 101, are shown with the happy mother in the photograph which I send. I may add that we never have the kittens drowned, and most of the hundred have lived to grow up into first-class cats. So you see she has brought up many

families, as well as several foster-children. This happy mother is over nine years old. The photograph was taken by Miss A. Rawlinson, of River.—Miss Violet Statham, River Vicarage, Dover.

THE "BORDER MARRIAGE COTTAGE" AT COLDSTREAM.

AFTER the abolition of Fleet marriages in England, in 1754, English people desiring to marry secretly could not do so in their own country.

Thus the practice arose of posting across the border into Scotland, where Gretna Green in the west and Coldstream in the east proved suitable places for the runaway marriages, whose sole formality was the subscribing of a certificate by the officiating priest and witnesses. The fee ranged from half a guinea to fifty pounds, according to the rank and position of those married. This practice was continued until 1856, when the English law was relaxed and the cotch law altered. The marriage of Lord Brougham in 1819 is among the most notable of those which took place at Coldstream.—Mr. W. Paterson, 3, Sciennes Gardens, Edinburgh.

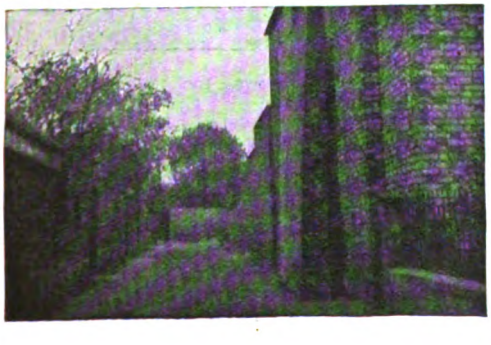


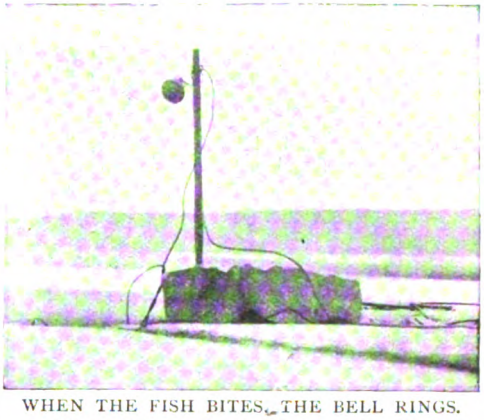
A BUTTERFLY THAT RESEMBLES AN OWL.

HERE is a photograph of the owl butterfly of South America, shown from its under side. The wings of these butterflies expand to as much as six or seven inches, and the insect derives its popular name from the fact of the two curious eye-like spots on its lower wings making it resemble the face of an owl. This resemblance can be plainly seen in the illustration if viewed upside-down, and when held at about an arm's length from the eyes of the observer. Just what purpose these curious eye-like spots serve in Nature is sometimes difficult to understand, although it is highly probable that in the case of insects their purpose is that of protection. In the present instance, for example, we should remember that when the butterfly comes to rest this under-side aspect of the wings is presented to view, the two wings being closed together--that is to say, an aspect such as appears when one half of the illustration is covered is shown on either side of the insect. It follows that an enemy of the butterfly would be confronted on either side with a startling "eye," and should this not be sufficient to keep it at bay, and an attack should be made, it is this eye-like spot that the bird or other enemy would most probably strike for; with the result that the wing would be perforated at a part that would not inconvenience the butterfly very much, although a similar thrust at its body would mean death to it. Meanwhile, the enemy is probably so much astounded at the unexpected turn of events that it becomes scared, or at least too suspicious for a further attack.—Mr. John J. Ward, Rusinurbe House, Somerset Road, Coventry.

A "SPITE WALL."

THE photograph below shows how abnormally developed the quality of determination may become. The owner of the property on the left also owned the land right up to the wall of the house on the right. A bedroom window in the end wall of the latter which overlooked his garden caused him great uneasiness. As he failed in an attempt to make the tenant block up the window he built the thin slice of wall seen in our photo. The space between this and the house-wall is only a matter of about six inches. It is many years since this wall was built. My mother remembers it for the last forty years. It is situated in Mill Lane, Heworth, York.—Mr. Frank Thurgood, 124, Haxby Road, York.





WHEN THE FISH BITES, THE BELL RINGS.

I CAME across a clever fishing device the other day on the new Digue at Boulogne. The idea is that when there is a bite the pull on the line shakes the post, and consequently the bell attached thereto. One boy had charge of several of these and sat smoking bad cigarettes while awaiting the tinkling of the bells.—Mr. C. Horner, Alexandra Road, Hounslow.

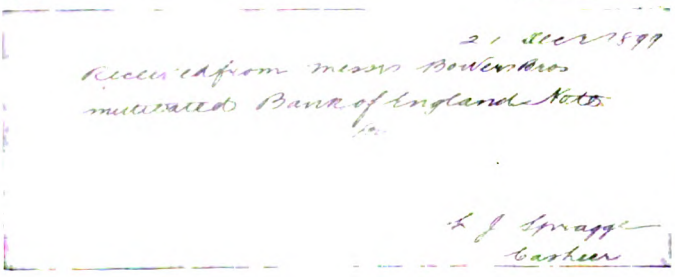
RENT—ONE SHILLING PER ANNUM!

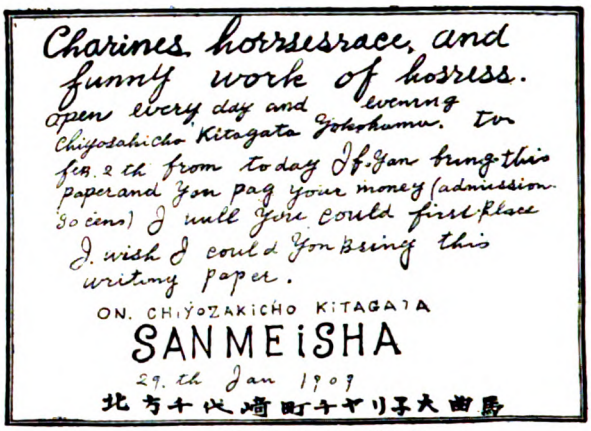
THE enclosed snapshot is that of a cottage on the estate of Holm, Kirkcudbrightshire. The interest of the photograph lies in the rental of the cottage, which is one shilling per annum. The old man at the gate is the tenant and occupier; he is a bachelor and does all his own work. The inside furnishings are as quaint and old-fashioned as the exterior is. The accommodation is a kitchen and two other apartments. There is also a fruit and vegetable garden, with a small plot in front and at either side of the cottage. In these days of cheap week-end cottages, surely this one as an all-the-year-round dwelling would come within the reach of the poorest. —Mr. R. K. Nisbet, 14, Clarenmont Crescent, Edinburgh.

THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF A BIRD AND A BANK-NOTE.

WHILST staying at our house in the country a very singular, but at the same time very lucky, thing happened. The birds build their nests in the roof of our house, and one day we saw a bird trying to take a piece of paper into its nest through one of the holes, but could not manage it, and so it dropped its burden. Just by chance we happened to pick the piece of paper up and, to our great surprise, found it was part of a five-pound Bank of England note. A few days afterwards one of us was walking in a distant part of the garden and found another part of the same five-pound note. The middle portion we did not find. How it came there we have never found out, and do not

suppose we ever shall; but, anyhow, on our return to London we took it to the bank and received the five pounds for it. We often wish we could find a few more in the same way. The above picture shows the house, a cross indicating the spot where the nest-hole is, and the one below the bank's receipt for the "mutilated bank-note."—Mr. G. Bowers, 8, Albert Square, Clapham, S.W.





ENGLISH AS SHE IS —.

I SEND you an advertisement which may be of interest to your readers. It is a card, distributed among the foreigners here, of a performance at a Japanese circus.—Mr. S. Hornstein, c/o the American Trading Company, No. 28 Settlement, Yokohama.

THE PACK O' CARDS INN.

A CERTAIN man, George Ley, during a game of cards, said that if he won the game he would build a house like one built of cards. He won and kept his promise. The building is an exact likeness of a house built of cards, and has fifty-two

windows, the number of cards in a pack. On one side there is a sun-dial bearing the date 1623 — about the time of the bet. Most of the coaches going to Lynton and Lynmouth stop there to refresh their horses. During the window tax most of the windows were blocked up, as will be seen in the photograph. —Mr. Edgar Goodman, 40, High Street, Weston-super-Mare.

"BUTTERFLY DAYS." By J. BALLAVOINE.

(By permission of The Berlin Photographic Co., 133, New Bond Street, London, W.)
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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxxiv. AUGUST, 1907. No. 200.

Pictures—Grave and Gay.

TO conjure up on canvas scenes of pretty childhood, to depict in glowing colours the clear-eyed, fresh-complexioned, and chubby-featured countenances of diminutive and immature humanity, and to produce pictures that shall stand out clearly from among the artistic idiosyncrasies of many modern painters—by reason of their inherent wholesomeness of *motif* and cheerfulness of composition—such is the aim of Mr. Joseph Clark, whose "Three Little Kittens" is reproduced herewith.

Personally, we confess to a decided predilection for "picture children." For "picture children" are seldom obtrusive; they are always clean, pretty, and smiling; and when you walk away they do not run after you with sticky fingers and slobbery mouths. Mr. Joseph Clark's trio are no exception to the rule, and, in spite of their torn frocks and tattered garments, they preserve an air of cheerful equanimity which is refreshing to behold. But we fear that they are not always like this in real life, for we are assured by the artist that the models were taken from London children belonging to the poorest of the poor, and we know that the lot of such unfortunates is, frequently, far from a happy one.

"THREE LITTLE KITTENS." By J. CLARK

(By permission of Goupil & Co., 25, Bedford Street, Strand, London, Owners of the Copyright.)

"WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST!" By T. M. HEMY.

(By permission of Goupil & Co., 25, Bedford Street, Strand, London, Owners of the Copyright.)

'IN THE SHADE."

By MARCUS STONE, R.A.

(By permission of C. E. Clifford & Co., the Publishers, 21, Haymarket, London, W.)

"BEFORE." By C. De LORT.

(By permission of Goupil & Co., 25 Bedford Street, Strand, London, Owners of the Copyright.)

"Three Little Kittens," the artist has named his picture. "*Six* Little Kittens" might have been a more fitting appellation, for it is difficult to say which are the more irresponsible, light-hearted, and joyous—the three children as they cluster together beneath the battered wreck of what was once an umbrella, or the tiny, furry bundles of pussyhood which they are so fondly nursing.

"The subject was suggested," writes Mr. Joseph Clark to THE STRAND, "as I was walking through a field near Winchester. Two ragged children were sitting under the hedge with a broken umbrella between them, and my friend said, 'There is a subject for you.' Some time after my return to London I gave the subject further consideration, and it resulted in my putting three children, each

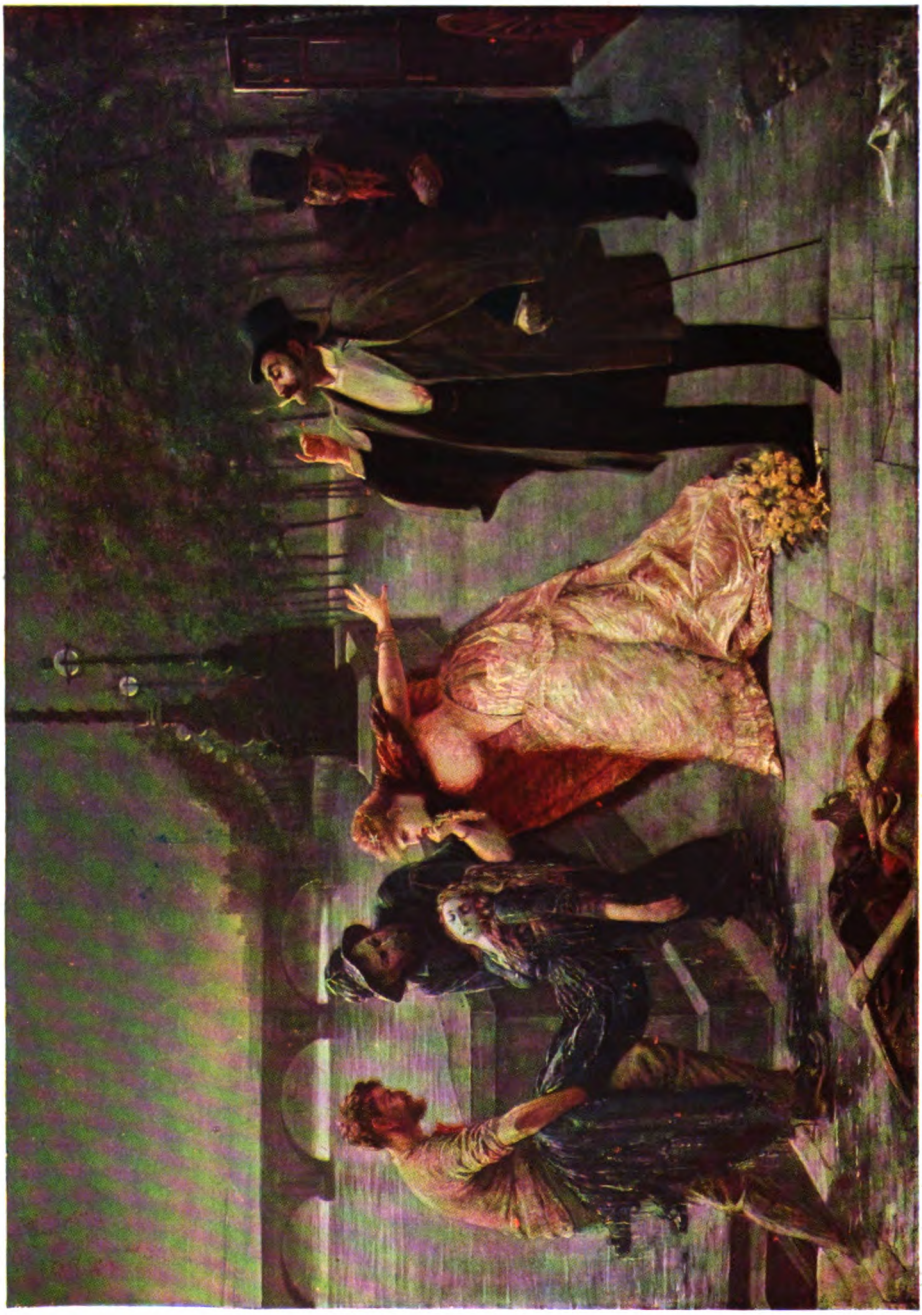
"BEHIND." By C. De LORT.

(By permission of Goupil & Co., 25, Bedford Street, Strand, London, Owners of the Copyright.)

bearing a kitten, into the picture. Hence the title. My background was painted near Weybridge."

Albeit to painters and poets, as to adventurous youth, the sea, in its unfathomable grandeur, its mystery, its beauty, is ever irresistible, to limn the great ocean on canvas, destitute of boats, shorn of shipping, with nothing but the heaving waters and the lowering clouds, requires a special order of genius. As Clarkson Stanfield once observed, "Many paint the sea as a mere accessory, as an adjunct to incident, tragic, comic, or picturesque, or as relief to the landscape."

Ocean himself does not appeal to all, but the charm of sea-life at second-hand is potent, alluring, overpowering to all. The novelists of the sea, or those who have



"TAKE HER UP TENDERLY,
LIFT HER WITH CARE."

By MME. AMYOT.

Copyright the property of Geo. Newnes, Ltd., London.

recounted their experiences afloat, have given us thrilling pictures of a wreck in mid-ocean in the midst of the angry waters. The scene has almost become familiar. The cry of the watch, the summoning of all hands to the pumps, the tattered sails, shattered masts, the cries of the doomed passengers, the shouting of the crew as each man, from skipper to cabin-boy, tears hither and thither athwart the wave-washed deck—the picture has been conjured up by a thousand writers before Captain Marryat and since.

And then the slow, pitiless careening of the great hulk in the trough of the sea; those terrible hours that often intervene ere rescue come or the merciless waves close over all for ever; those hours of mingled prayer and execrations, of cold and hunger, of hope and despair—all vivid with us is this terrible scene since the full accounts of the wreck of that splendid ship, the *Berlin*, but a few months back. Is it rescue? Then what hysterical overflowing of long-pent emotions, as the gallant lifeboat moves pluckily onwards to snatch them from the very jaws of death. What wonder if strong nerves yield at last to the strain, and men who have stolidly withstood the terrors of despair, of hunger and cold, who have never flinched from death, should suddenly collapse and sob aloud!

Yet how much is it to the credit of manhood—of British manhood, at least—when, no matter how great the love of life, how fierce the strain, how dreadful the plight, with doom still impending—for the rescuing craft is tiny and frail—one cry only arises and one command is tacitly obeyed, "Women and Children First!"

Thus in brief is the theme of Mr. Hemy's picture. A tiny girl in the arms of a stout mariner is the first to descend the rope. The others, huddled together on the deck, watch in anxious suspense, as one by one the passengers are lowered. "Will the ship hold out till all are rescued?" Such is the question that with pale lips and faltering utterance they ask one another. And the answer? That must, we think, depend on the individual temperament of the beholder.

It is charged against Mr. Marcus Stone, R.A., that his pictures are all "so much alike." But so are roses and foliage and sunsets. A t'ing of beauty, too, as one of this artist's friends recently reminded us, is a joy for ever. Besides, Mr. Marcus Stone's pictures owe much of their sameness to a similarity of setting and of costume. How he came to select the latter may be best told in the artist's own words:—

"The costume of to-day is not that of to-morrow, and it is not always easy to get it accepted as poetical and artistic. Accordingly I chose the costume of a generation or two before our own—a costume modern and yet sufficiently remote to stamp it with a certain fixedness and a certain poetry."

The present picture, "In the Shade," shows us a corner of a delightful old English garden. Tea is just over, and those who had recently congregated around the fragrant stew have now wandered away, *deux à deux*, to other parts of the spacious grounds, leaving lonely and disconsolate the pretty maiden seen sitting in the foreground. She is "in the shade"—the others have neglected her—and she wistfully wonders why it should be her lot to be left companionless while her sisters do not lack for gallants. But we venture to think that the dainty damsel will not long be allowed to mope by herself; we should lose all faith else in man as a connoisseur of beauty.

"The subject," writes Mr. Marcus Stone to THE STRAND, "was suggested by a late afternoon effect in my own garden. The background is more or less a true version of a portion of my house and garden as it was more than a quarter of a century ago—in no other case have I painted an actual scene in any of my pictures. The young maiden in the foreground was painted from *several* professional models."

Like so many genre painters M. de Lort finds a happy field for his pictorial excursions in the eighteenth century. "Before" and "Behind" tell their own story and almost render letterpress superfluous. Human nature makes all akin when Cupid sends his darts among high-born and low-born alike.

The scene is fair Normandy. The young squire, returning from the village in his cabriolet, with Jacques by his side, meets the fair Mlle. Hortense walking demurely by the roadside, to whom he gallantly offers a lift. She blushingly accepts, not, we fear, without inward flutterings of anticipation as to what may happen when the chestnut colt warms to his paces, and the squire is encouraged to unburden himself of his amatory opinions. The episode may well have been described by Sterne. When Hortense accepts the polite invitation to ride in front, her maid, Jeanne, is fain to close with Jacques' offer that she shall ride with him behind. The vehicle proceeds; young monsieur does unbosom himself; his arm steals around the lady's neck, and his lips fondly press her cheek. What would groom and handmaiden say were they to witness such behaviour?

Suppose they were to be seen? "*Taisez-vous, Monsieur Charles!*" And what are the prim Jeanne and the quiet Jacques doing all this time? Folding their hands, of course, and admiring the landscape, or discussing the price of geese and pullets at Chablais market. We turn to the companion picture and behold the youth, more audacious than his master, with both arms about the lady, and she, less coy than her mistress, encircles his neck with one of hers! Such a position entails some inconvenience and not a little danger even, considering their perch and the state of the road, and Jeanne has this very instant lost her basket with the whole of its contents. But love is blind! She scarce seems sensible of the loss and clasps the doting scapegrace closer, which is probably as well, because he seems to have no other means of support and safety. The falling basket, however, nearly brings tragedy to two other lovers—bipeds also, but feathered, who are coquetting in the roadway. This last touch completes the triple comedy of what might fairly be entitled "Cupid's Car; or, Like Master, Like Man."

Poetry and painting are twin sisters; they go hand in hand together. Nearly every great picture is, in its way, a poem, and the converse of this is no less true. It is not surprising, then, to find that so many painters seek inspiration for their themes in the lines of their favourite poets; and few poems, perhaps, have been so widely resorted to in this respect as Tom Hood's famous "Bridge of Sighs."

"One of the noblest and, speaking of fancy, one of the most singularly fanciful of modern poets," wrote Edgar Allan Poe of the great Irish lyricist. Then, speaking of the "Bridge of Sighs," he adds: "The vigour of this poem is no less remarkable than its pathos. The versification, although carrying the fanciful to the verge of the fantastic, is nevertheless admirably adapted to the wild insanity which is the thesis of the poem."

The passage selected by Mme. Amyot for illustration in the picture we reproduce runs as follows:—

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young and so fair.

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

The artist shows us the Thames Embankment by night—

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light.

A lady and gentleman, returning late from the theatre, come to be the chance spectators of one of those pathetic tragedies which are, alas! so frequently associated with England's stately waterway. From the sluggish-flowing, dark, mysterious waters the body of "one more unfortunate" has just been rescued. The richness of the lady's attire offers a striking contrast with the torn and bedraggled garments of the young suicide, while her horror-struck countenance emphasizes the remoteness of such incidents of sordid misery from her own pampered and luxurious existence.

But it is not tragedy alone that Mme. Amyot has here given us. The scene savours strongly of melodrama; and in melodrama we always look for comic relief. This is amply provided for in the figure of the attendant husband. The mere fact that he is smoking a cigarette proclaims him at once for what he is. "He smokes and smokes and is a villain!" we are tempted to exclaim, slightly to parody a not unknown quotation. Truly a hardened ruffian of the typical Drury Lane variety, to whom the poor dead girl presumably owes her misfortune.

In the tout shown in the background we have a graphic delineation of one of those strange night-birds who infest the streets of London after dark. For him the tragic incident has little interest. No doubt he rather welcomes it as being instrumental in putting a few coppers into his own pocket. All is grist that comes to his mill.

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun.

In "Butterfly Days," by J. Ballavoine, which is reproduced in our frontispiece, we see, presumably, this artist's type of ideal beauty. Certainly the maiden is comely enough to please the most fastidious, but we confess that the garb of the early eighties is not the setting in which we are wont to enshrine our own particular Venus. It is old-fashioned enough, certainly, yet hardly sufficiently distant from us to be acclaimed picturesque. Moreover, we doubt very much whether the costume of the mid-Victorian era will ever become a source of æsthetic delight to connoisseurs of future ages. But, in spite of this, it cannot be denied that the ensemble is charming.

The Scarlet Runner.

IX.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE MISSING CHAPTER

By C. N. and A. M. Williamson.

Copyright, 1907, by C. N. and A. M. Williamson.

WHEN Christopher Race came back from Amsterdam after his adventure with the diamond carriers, an engagement which he had expected to take up fell through owing to unforeseen business which detained his would-be client; therefore, he was not too pleased to find himself free for more than a fortnight.

Something might turn up, of course. Something generally did turn up with Christopher. Indeed, he had begun to think that he must be the sort of man who attracted adventures as a magnet attracts iron. But when, after he had been idle for a day or two, the card of a Mr. James Harkness was brought to him, he could not regard it as the preface to an adventure.

Neither the card nor the name suggested anything exciting, or even interesting. For one thing, James was a name which had always seemed particularly prosaic to Christopher. Nothing could possibly happen to a man named James, unless he turned into Jim, which he could only do legitimately if he were of a certain type; and this visiting-card was not of the sort that the Jim type would own.

The name was engraved in an attempt at Old English script, according to the conception of some country shopkeeper, on thin, shiny pasteboard, and there was not even the conventional prefix of "Mr." It was just "James Harkness," as if the owner of the visiting-card did not think himself of enough social importance to have a handle.

It did not occur to Christopher that James Harkness might be a client; rather he fancied that his caller would prove to be a commercial traveller, unobtrusively pushing some new invention of a motor-car firm. He was within an ace of sending down word that he was engaged on important business and regretted that he could not possibly see the gentleman; but as the important business happened to consist in reading a dull novel which bored him inexpressibly, and as he had besides just run out of tobacco and it would be idiotic to go and buy more in a thunderstorm, he told the servant to show Mr. Harkness up to his sitting-room.

The maid who, during the last few months, had brought to Christopher Race's door so many strange people now produced one whom no wildest stretch of the imagination could fit with that adjective.

He was small in stature, with a neat, slender figure clad in a grey tweed suit that boasted the "American shoulder." He had a fine

"JAMES HARKNESS."

head, and would, from the shape of his forehead and cut of his features, have somewhat resembled a provincial Napoleon, if instead of Napoleon's eagle gaze he had not possessed the soft, wistful brown eyes of a misunderstood dog—a dog who has never deserved a kick in his life but has had many, and has ceased to hope or even wish for a caress—indeed, would be startled and embarrassed if he got one.

This neat, rather dapper little man walked into the ugly lodging-house sitting-room with an air that was briskly business-like, yet oddly apologetic.

"Oh, certainly he wants to introduce a new patent tyre or an improved carburettor," thought Christopher. But the first few words of his visitor showed that one must not jump at conclusions.

"How do you do, sir? I'm very pleased to have the honour of meeting the celebrated Mr. Race; and I hope that, if you're not engaged, I can get you to take me a trip in your automobile," said Mr. Harkness, with an accent that proclaimed him from the Middle West of America.

Christopher replied that he and Scarlet Runner were disengaged for the present, and invited his caller to sit down and talk business. There was something in the combination of American briskness and — perhaps—un-American shyness which pleased him; and James Harkness—not on shiny pasteboard, but in flesh and blood—had a winning smile; winning because it was like a schoolboy's, and had no self-consciousness in it. He might have been old-looking for thirty, or young-looking for thirty-five, and there was grave, business experience in the firm set of his jaw. But the eyes were a boy's eyes; and Christopher liked him in spite of the fact that James — plain, unromantic, undiluted James—did not appear an ill-chosen name to express his personality.

"Sorry I can't offer you a cigar or cigarette," said Race. "To my disgust, I've just found that I'm out of everything." (He did not add that this was one reason why Mr. Harkness now had the honour of his acquaintance.)

"Oh, I never smoke, thank you," returned the American. "I used to, but I saw it was going to get on my nerves, so I quit. My business—I guess over here you'd call it stockbroking—makes some fellows kind of jumpy, anyhow; and I think a man ought to keep control of himself."

Christopher said that he was quite right, and invited him to have a whisky and soda. Mr. Harkness again thanked his host, but declined. He did not touch alcohol. In his opinion there was nothing better than ice-water, unless it was lemonade, for a hard worker.

"That's just it," he went on. "It's hard work that's brought me over to this side. I'm taking a vacation; it's the first one I've ever had since I left school, and that was when I was fourteen years old. I've had my nose to the grindstone ever since—but I like it well enough. Mrs. Harkness goes to the seaside every summer, which is the right thing for a lady to do; and she's had a run out to California and down to Florida once or twice, winters. Now she's travelling in Europe with some lady friends of hers—has been for the last eighteen months—and it was her idea I should take this vacation and meet her. I just landed yesterday, and took train right to London. So, you see, I haven't lost much time in giving myself the pleasure of calling on you, sir."

"How did you hear of Scarlet Runner?" Christopher inquired.

The little dark man with the head of a Napoleon and the eyes of a misunderstood dog smiled his engaging, boyish smile. "I guess you must be pretty modest," said he. "Why, in America you've been a kind of a hero with the ladies ever since you helped to set the young King and Queen of Dalvania on their throne; and the public have never lost sight of you. I feel proud to have the chance of a ride in your automobile."

"I shall be delighted to take Mrs. Harkness and you for a tour, if you don't want to be gone longer than a fortnight," replied Christopher, pleased in spite of himself by the genuine admiration in the brown eyes.

"Two weeks is just what I was thinking of," said Mr. Harkness. "But my wife won't be in the party. The reason I can go is because I had a Marconi on board ship saying she'd been invited to stay awhile in a French château, and she thought she'd like to have the experience. She hasn't been acquainted with the Baron and Baroness long—they're friends of *her* friends—so she couldn't ask them to invite me too; and her idea was for me to just fool around, seeing sights in England, till she was through visiting. The people who've promised to go automobiling with me I met on the steamer. I suppose three passengers and their baggage wouldn't be too much of a burden to you, sir?"

Christopher set Mr. Harkness's mind at rest on this point, and then, finding that the

American was an amateur in motoring, he gave him advice about luggage. Also, they discussed routes, and it appeared that Mr. Harkness, who had never found time to leave his own country before, had no preference. All he wanted was to see some of the prettiest places; and it was finally decided, as October was not an ideal month for the North, though the weather was still warm, that Scarlet Runner should conduct the party through Devonshire and Cornwall, going by way of the New Forest. The question of money lay in abeyance till the last, and then it was Christopher who introduced it. "I guess I can leave the price to you, sir," said the little man from the West. "I don't know anything about the charge for automobiles myself; but you're a gentleman, and whatever you say will be right."

The start was to be made next day, as there was no time to waste, and Christopher was asked to bring Scarlet Runner to an old-fashioned hotel in Suffolk Street, not at all the sort of hotel an American would be likely to choose unless he had heard of it from English friends. However, that was not Race's affair, and he and his car arrived promptly before the door at ten o'clock in the morning, according to arrangement.

Though he had a liking for Mr. James Harkness, Christopher was not looking forward to the trip with any keenness of interest. He had pictured to himself the sort of friends the kindly, provincial American would have been likely to pick up on the ship. There were two, he knew, and that was all he did know; but he imagined that they would be tired business men like Harkness himself, though probably without Harkness's naive charm. Seldom had he been more surprised, therefore, than when his client ushered out from the hotel two ladies. Nor was their sex the most amazing part of their unexpectedness. That which was particularly astonishing about them was—themselves.

One was elderly, the other young. She who was elderly was English; and the thought that flashed into Christopher Race's head was that if she had a twin brother he would be a fine, brown, hawk-eyed soldier: one of those brave, unobtrusive men who go off as a matter of course to far-away, unhealthful lands, there to do their country's work well and faithfully, without making any fuss about it, until their Sovereign fills their place with a younger man, or until they die in harness.

This woman, though womanly, had the eyes of a soldier—steadfast, enduring; and though she was not yet really old, her hair was white, in fine contrast with the calm dark brows.

"HIS CLIENT USHERED OUT FROM THE HOTEL TWO LADIES."

She, for a ship acquaintance of Mr. Harkness, was remarkable enough; but her companion—a young girl who could hardly be twenty—was bewildering.

Christopher had never seen a girl like her. She was a princess out of a fairy tale; not just a flesh and blood princess who had strayed into a story of fairies because it was convenient to have her there, but a princess born of a fairy spell.

This fancy did actually present itself to the young man's mind, so completely was he swept off his feet by the appearance of Mr. Harkness's young friend; and though he was usually ashamed if he found himself by

chance being sentimental, the girl was so exquisitely romantic a figure that he did not stop to check his extravagant similes.

She made him think of a garden of lilies in moonlight; and this though she was dressed in grey cloth by a tailor who understood his business; therefore, she must indeed have been wonderful.

Christopher had seen a good many beautiful girls—in fact, had even gone out of his way in life to see them; but he felt, without being able to understand precisely why, that this young creature was different from any other he had met, or was likely ever to meet again. Nevertheless, it did not occur to him to fall in love with her at first sight—which he certainly had a right to do if he chose. He would as soon have thought of falling in love with a girl-queen of enchanting beauty, of whom he had caught a dazzling glimpse on the eve of her coronation and marriage with a suitable prince-consort. Yet she was a friend of the provincial Napoleon from the Western States, who had found her on shipboard; and she and her stately, sad-faced companion had consented to take a motor trip with an insignificant, rather common-place little chance acquaintance.

"Miss Dalrymple—Miss Nourma Dalrymple—let me present Mr. Race," rattled off the American, primly and conscientiously. "This is the automobile I've been talking to you about. A beauty, isn't she?"

Then, having discharged what he considered his duty, he fussed over the luggage as it came out from the hotel, and fussed a good deal more about getting the ladies comfortably seated, tucking a light rug of his own over the girl and round the girl, as if she had been an early crocus to be protected from some blighting flurry of snow. Indeed, though she had not the air or look of illness, she did seem as fragile, as ethereal, as a flower of the South transported to the North—some kind of dream-flower, Christopher told himself, foolishly—a night-blooming Ceres, perhaps, for everyone to wonder at, and then to vanish as a ray of moonlight vanishes when the moon is swallowed by a cloud.

They started, and as Race was not carrying a chauffeur Harkness proposed to sit beside him on the front seat. But Miss Dalrymple the elder asked for his company in the tonneau, and he accepted the invitation shyly, delightedly, as if it were a favour bestowed by Royalties. Nevertheless, he was soon laughing and talking, as the car ran through London streets out into the suburbs, making for the country. Christopher heard him telling one or two funny, typically American stories, which evidently amused his guests; and if ever a silence fell, it was Harkness or the girl who broke it, never the elder of the two women, whom Nourma Dalrymple called "Aunt Constance."

Christopher's simple conception of James Harkness had now suddenly and completely changed. The naive yet brisk little business man had assumed in his eyes the importance of a Mystery. But, after all, was not the mystery rather an obvious one—too obvious? Race asked himself on second thoughts.

Here was a hard-worked American taking his first holiday, and bent on enjoying it. "When the cat's away the mice will play." Mrs. Harkness was away, and she was amusing herself. Naturally it would occur to Mr. Harkness, who was probably very rich, like most travelling Americans, that now was the "chance of his life" to amuse himself too, and he was doing it. That was all; except that two exceptionally interesting women were ready to help him do it—at his expense.

Yes, that must be all. And yet—Christopher could not make this obvious supposition fit the characters in the little drama which was to be played in his motor-car.

The weather was perfect, and each day that came to take the place of its dead brother was more exquisite than the last. Christopher was cordially invited to have his meals with his passengers—sometimes charming picnic meals, in which the aunt or niece performed dainty miracles with a somewhat battered tea basket, sometimes meals at delightful, old-fashioned hotels or country inns. If there was any sight-seeing to be done on foot, he was expected to do it with the others, although it appeared that Devonshire and Cornwall were familiar to "Aunt Constance," and she could have played cicerone for the party as efficiently as the owner of Scarlet Runner. Occasionally Christopher had Nourma Dalrymple to himself for half an hour at a time, on some short excursion; and it seemed to him that her mind, her nature, was as wonderful as her face. She had thoughts high and clear and light-giving as the stars, and she spoke them out with apparent frankness, yet at the end of a week Christopher had drawn no nearer to the solution of the mystery which had assembled this strange party than in the hour of starting.

He did not even know anything about the Dalrymples, aunt and niece, except that the girl had spent most, if not all, of her life in

"OCCASIONALLY CHRISTOPHER HAD NOURMA DALRYMPLE TO HIMSELF FOR HALF AN HOUR AT A TIME ON SOME SHORT EXCURSION."

India, and that the elder woman had—more or less lately—gone out there to visit her brother, who was Nourma's father. Who the father was, what he did in India, or where was his home in that wide land of enchantments, Christopher did not hear; nor did he hear why Miss Dalrymple had taken her niece to America. He knew that they had been, only because James Harkness had met them on the ship coming back; and this was the girl's first sight of England, as it was that of her new friend. Whatever she admired, he admired. If she so much as said of a place, "Oh, I should like to see it!" her host was not happy unless the vague wish could be quickly gratified. He watched over her even more anxiously than did the evidently devoted aunt. He was depressed if she appeared absent-minded, as she did occasionally, or if her lips drooped, or if she had a far-away look in the dark eyes, which were almost startlingly beautiful under the soft frame of moonlight-on-wheatfield-coloured air.

There were always flowers for both ladies every morning, even at the most out-of-the-way stopping-places, and there were sweets, and any book which Nourma Dalrymple had said to her aunt or Christopher—Harkness knew little about books—that she would care to read.

Nothing could be more patent than that the provincial Napoleon adored his strangely-acquired fairy princess; yet, though by design or accident the name of the absent wife was never mentioned in Christopher's hearing, Harkness did not behave like any other man in love, legitimately or otherwise, whom Race had seen. He never tried to turn a conversation upon himself; he never paid the girl compliments; he never schemed to steal her away from the others for a few moments alone, though it was unconcealable that to be near her was the little man's heaven. Altogether, Christopher could not make him out at all; nor could he make out the meaning of the tour, or what was to come of it afterwards, if anything.

So matters went on until they had been gone for a fortnight, all but one day, and were on their way back to London, which they would reach the following evening. They had returned by Stratford-on-Avon; and wandering about the beautiful old town, Christopher had Nourma Dalrymple beside him. She was even more than usually sweet and gentle in her manner that day, though thoughtful, and Christopher ought to have been enjoying each moment in the society of such a unique and radiant girl; yet somehow he felt troubled and restless, as sensitive women do when the air is crackling with electricity before a thunderstorm. He could not think of things worth saying, though he would have liked to be brilliant, and instead of looking at his companion he found himself continually watching the pair who walked ahead—James Harkness and Miss Dalrymple.

They were absorbed in some very grave discussion, that was clear; so completely absorbed that they might as well have been staring at London hoardings as gazing upon the beautiful beamed walls of Shakespeare's birthplace. Once, when Christopher happened to catch a glimpse of the American's face, he

was startled. The little man looked as if he had been struck a death-blow. But afterwards his eyes lit up with feverish excitement, or hope, and a spot of colour burned on each of his rather high cheek-bones. Christopher could not, to save his life, help being curious. He would have guessed, if Harkness were not married, that overtures had been made to the aunt for the niece's hand and repulsed by her; but, as it was, no explanation of this sort was feasible.

That night, as Race sat in his room at the hotel, smoking a pipe before going to bed, and wondering what had happened, someone knocked at his door. He rose and opened it, to see Harkness standing outside, twice as shy, twice as apologetic, as he had been in the first moment of making acquaintance.

"I—there are some things—perhaps you'd let me talk to you about," he began, still on the threshold.

"Come in," said Christopher pleasantly. "Is there anything in Scarlet Runner's performances or mine that you don't like, and want me to change?" he went on, laughing good-naturedly at the other's hesitation. "Because if there is you mustn't mind telling me so."

"No, indeed," replied Harkness. "You've both been just about perfect this trip. And it's been a grand trip, too. I was a blamed idiot, I suppose, to think it could amount to more than it has. But I always was hopeful if I cared about anything." He sat down, relapsing into silence and thoughtfulness. Christopher was silent too, for the good reason that he knew not what to say. He was at a loss to understand his employer's meaning, though, if the American had been a coarser type of man, he might have sprung to some conclusion. But soon Harkness began again. "As a matter of fact, sir, it's your advice I want to ask, if you'll permit me."

Christopher answered that he would be glad to give it, or to be of use; and he spoke sincerely. This was one of Christopher Race's good points. There was no affectation about him. When he said a thing he meant it, and had a way of convincing you that he did, without many words. Harkness looked at him gratefully, with those eyes of a wistful dog.

"It's a mighty delicate matter," the American went on; "a matter I wouldn't have any call to talk about, if I could see my way clear how to act. But I don't. That's just it. I'm a plain business man. What's that saying about fools rushing in where angels would be afraid to show their noses, or something kind of like that? Well, I feel that way right now. But you're different. I don't know as I'm putting it so's you can understand, but what I see about you is, that you've *lived*. Now, I never lived—till I got on board the *Baltic*, less than four weeks ago. I knew what business was, and how to get along in the world, and my duty to my wife and my neighbours; but I hadn't *lived*. I didn't realize what it was to be really alive, or to live. But I do now. I've learned in less than four weeks what I hadn't up till then in thirty-three years, and probably shouldn't for thirty-three more years—or till the day of my death. Yes, sir, I should just have dried up like a withered leaf

"'IT'S A MIGHTY DELICATE MATTER,' THE AMERICAN WENT ON."

or an old nut if it hadn't been for that blessed girl. That's what I've got to thank her for—life."

Christopher did not speak. What could he say—yet? But there was stealing into his puzzled brain a glimmer of light. No more than a faint glimmer; but it was enough to keep him from misunderstanding the man with a name to which nothing worth happening could ever possibly happen.

"Do you take in my meaning, sir?" asked Harkness. "Because, if you do, it'll be easier for me to go on."

"I—well—I suppose you've unfortunately fallen in love with Miss Nourma Dalrymple," blurted out Christopher, whose thoughts of the situation were more delicate than his words. But, in a way, it was better to be blunt; it flung open doors and windows and let in air.

"*Unfortunately* in love?" repeated Harkness, in a shocked way. "Oh, then I've been fool enough to mix things up so you can't see, after all. Why, it's the most fortunate thing ever happened to me. It's like being shut up in a kind of dark cell for thirty-three years and then having an angel from heaven fly down to let you out. Once you're out, you know, nothing can put you where you were before, because, when you go back into the cell, it won't be dark or musty any more, but full of all the glory you saw when you were outside. If you've got anything in you at all, you're bound to take that much with you. Maybe you think I'm crazy, talking like this, Mr. Race, but I have to explain. And it isn't as if you were a stranger. We've been acquainted a mighty short while, as time goes; but you're right in this chapter where the angel comes in."

"The missing chapter," Christopher muttered, more to himself than the other, but Harkness heard, and answered:—

"I see what you're thinking about," said he. "You think this is going to be the missing chapter in my life. That—that my friends—that my wife—won't ever know anything about it."

"I suppose that is what was in my head," Christopher confessed.

"Well, you're right, sir, in a way. We'll call it the missing chapter. It'll be that for the other people—the ones who wouldn't be able to understand it if they were told, and might get thoughts I'd rather fall dead right here than anyone—either near me or far off—should have about an angel. You, for instance, wouldn't have known there could be such an angel on earth, if you hadn't seen her and been with her, would you, now?"

"No," said Christopher. "She's wonderful. You're very excusable, Mr. Harkness."

"I guess I *wouldn't* have been excusable if I hadn't loved her, because I'd have been a block of wood," the little man retorted, almost indignantly.

"But what about her?" Christopher ventured. "Forgive me—you asked my advice, you know. Is this going to make her unhappy?"

"I don't quite catch your meaning." Harkness was looking honestly bewildered.

"I mean, if she has learned to care——"

"Great *Scot*, sir, care for me? Be in lo—— Oh, no, I can't even say the word in a connection like that. She feels kindly towards me, I know, and the *Lord* knows how good to me she's been. As for me, why, you don't think—no, of course you don't think—that I'd have been worm enough, green idiot enough, beast enough, to speak that same word to her about myself?"

"If I could have thought it for an instant, I apologize," said Christopher.

"Thank you, sir. You're a white man. I knew you were. That's why I've turned to you; for that reason, and because, as I said, you've *lived*, you've felt, in your years, though they're not so many as mine. I love that girl—yes. But even if there weren't a Mrs. Harkness I wouldn't have told Miss Nourma, any more than a common man like me could tell a queen he was in love with her and would like to have her for his wife. Her kind isn't for my kind. And, besides, she loves somebody; I guess a mighty different sort of a man from me. She didn't say anything about him herself, but her aunt told me."

"Is that what she was talking of this afternoon?" inquired Christopher, recalling the mysterious conversation which had seemed to crush the life out of the American.

"My goodness, no. She told me on shipboard."

"Then what *did* you expect from this trip which you haven't got, since you knew all along that the girl was in love with another man?" The question was out before Christopher quite knew that he was asking it aloud.

Harkness stared blankly. "Expect? Why, I didn't dare *expect* anything, the way things stood; the way they'd been explained to me. But I *hoped*. I hoped the motoring and the beautiful scenery, and the fresh air and new experiences, might do her good.

Though I ought to have known that what a tour from India, 'most round the world, to America couldn't do, two weeks in an auto wouldn't. But, you see, she happened to say, the afternoon before we landed in Southampton, that going in a motor-car ought to be a nice way of travelling in England, and that she'd never taken more than a short ride in one. That's how I thought of it; and, of course, the first thing I did was to hustle round and find Mr. Race. If *any* old automobile was good, said I to myself, a historical kind of a one like his Scarlet Runner ought to be just It. And it has been. But though she's enjoyed everything, she doesn't feel any stronger for the two weeks."

"I think I see," said Christopher. "The father, in India, wouldn't let his daughter marry the man she loved, and Miss Dalrymple has been trotting her niece about the world to help her to forget."

"No, you don't see," Harkness answered. "But how could you, without having any sort of a clue to the real story? The young man is a fine chap any father would be proud to have his daughter marry; a soldier who got a Victoria Cross in that war of yours with the Boers, before he was ordered to India. He's titled, too. I think he's a baron or a baronet, and good-looking, Miss Dalrymple said. She called him a splendid fellow, worthy of her niece, so you can guess what he must be, for her to think that. But Miss Nourma refused him."

"Although she loved him?"

"Because she loved him. But she made him think she didn't care, otherwise he wouldn't have given her up."

"And now she repents?"

"No, she doesn't repent. She'd do the same thing over again, though it nearly killed her to do it, and she isn't as strong even as she was then. She refused him because she was under sentence of death."

"Good heavens! What are you talking about?" exclaimed Christopher.

"We've just struck the part that I came here to talk about," answered Harkness, quietly.

"Has the poor child got consumption?" Christopher asked. "She doesn't look ill. It's only that she's different from other girls—seems made of moonlight, or flowers, or something unearthly."

"That's *just* the thought one has about her," said Harkness. "It came to me the minute I saw her. My steamer chair was put next to her aunt's on deck, or I shouldn't have got acquainted. I haven't much cheek anyhow, and I should never have mustered up enough for that. But Miss Dalrymple and I talked, and so it all happened, naturally. I suppose it was to be—I mean I was to live my Missing Chapter, the only real one in the whole book. I guess Miss Dalrymple understood me pretty soon, so she told me things. By and by it was the whole history. Miss Nourma's father was an officer, like the young man his daughter loves. He spent a summer in Kashmir, on leave, about twenty-one years ago, and had some letters of introduction to high-up, grand sort of natives, princes and

"'WE'VE JUST STRUCK THE PART THAT I CAME HERE TO TALK ABOUT,' ANSWERED HARKNESS."

noblemen. Then he somehow—I don't know how, for his sister didn't tell me—got to see a girl he wasn't supposed to see, for women there aren't much on show, are they? The two fell desperately in love, and he stole her away. They married; and as it wasn't exactly the right sort of thing for an officer to have done, when he was a kind of guest, he gave up the Army. Miss Nourma's mother was perfectly beautiful, Miss Dalrymple says; looked as if she'd been carved out of ivory, with gold for hair and starry sapphires for eyes. Her husband brought her to England, but she was home-sick, and the climate didn't suit her; so he managed to get some civil appointment in a remote part of India, where he's stopped ever since, not having any money of his own. And his father was so dis-pleased with the marriage, he didn't leave him much. But the lovely Kashmiran princess died when her baby was born; that's Miss Nourma, whom they named after her mother. And it seems that the child of a European man and a Kashmiran woman, though almost always extraordinarily hand-some, is just the same as born under sentence of death. They loved each other so much, those two, that they didn't think of anything else; but afterwards Captain Dalrymple must have had some awful heartaches, seeing that beautiful angel grow up like a lily, and knowing (for apparently it's a thing well known) that she was in all probability doomed to be cut down before she was twenty-one."

"I have heard that sort of thing from Army people who've come back from India," said Christopher, dully. "I believe it's true enough. Heavens! What an awful fate to hang over so lovely a head! Can nothing be done?"

"If Mr. Dalrymple had been a rich man something might have been done earlier, perhaps, or so it appears, now that the world's growing scientific. When she was a child, Miss Nourma might have been sent away from India, not to England, but to the High Engadine for the winters and somewhere bracing every summer—mountains, or the seaside; and she might have had great specialists to look after her. But he was poor, and nobody supposed, anyhow, that there was a chance for the little girl to escape the fate others had suffered when their time came, else the father might have made a tremendous effort. As for Nourma, she was happy enough, for, of course, nobody told her. It was only just before Miss Dalrymple, the aunt, came out to visit her brother and niece (indeed, I guess that was what took her out) that Miss Nourma overheard a conversation which let her know what to expect. Someone was giving a dance in honour of her eighteenth birthday; and while she was sitting on a balcony, waiting for her partner to come back (the young man she'd fallen in love with, it was), a couple inside a window began to talk. At first they didn't mention her name, but said what a pity it was, a beautiful girl like that, certain to fall into a decline and go off before the age of twenty-one—only three more years to live, at most. Then came the name, and she knew. But think of her pluck, sir! She just got quietly up and moved off to another place at a little distance, so that when her partner came the people on the other side of the curtain needn't discover what an awful thing they'd done. But instead of saying 'Yes' when the young officer proposed, as he did that very night, she said 'No,' pretending not to care a bit, and telling him he must find some other girl better suited to him than she was.

"Not a word did she tell her father when she got home, either, but went on living as if nothing had happened, as long as she could. Only her body wasn't as strong as her soul. She broke down, and finally grew delirious, so that her father heard the truth in a broken kind of way, which made him question the girl when she was getting well. My guess is that something he must have written about it, and the tragedy of it, to his sister, brought Miss Dalrymple flying out to India. She'd never seen Nourma before, and now she blames herself for not going sooner; she just adores her niece. She isn't too rich herself, but she sold stocks or something, and got hold of enough cash to take Nourma a long sea trip, which a doctor there said might possibly give a new tone to the girl's constitution, late as it was to try experiments. But the day I met the ladies, Miss Nourma was no stronger than the day she left home. And to-day she's no better than the day we started motoring. I don't think she cares much, except for her father's sake. You see how serene and—and radiant she is always, as if she'd sailed right up to the zenith to live with the moon and stars. Only this afternoon it was a little different with her, maybe; for the trip will be over to-morrow, and she and her aunt have been having a talk about—her being worse, and going back to India. Miss Dalrymple told me. And she told me something else, which she hadn't

mentioned before, because, as she said, there seemed no use speaking of it.

"It's that I want to ask your advice about, Mr. Race. It seems that when they got to London, Miss Dalrymple took Nourma to see a great specialist a doctor in New York had recommended her to consult, as she was always catching at some hope or other. His opinion was that there might be a good chance of saving Miss Nourma, making her strong and well as any girl. Only neither of them saw how the thing he suggested could be done; and she didn't even tell her niece what he'd said."

"What was the thing?" Christopher asked, intensely interested.

"Oh, I guess you've heard of it mostly in story-books, where beautiful girls do it to save their lovers' lives. But the question is, could a chap like me, so much beneath her in every way, and almost a stranger as far as time of acquaintance goes, have any right to propose it? Would it be a monstrous liberty that a lady would resent like a kind of insult? I don't see how I could bear it if she did."

"You forget you haven't told me yet what the thing is," Christopher reminded him.

"Oh, so I didn't. I was just thinking out loud. Why, that doctor said, if a perfectly healthy person, who never drank alcohol or took any other poison into the system, would give his or her blood to Miss Nourma, it could make her all over again like new. She might marry, and be happy, and live to a good old age. He and Miss Dalrymple didn't see how any such person could be found, for she's too old, and so is the girl's father. But I'm not old yet, and I'm strong."

"You would do that for her?" asked Christopher.

"If I dared to propose it. If you don't think it would be considered too great a liberty."

"A liberty! And you'd do it to save her—for another man?"

"Of course, that would be a great happiness for me to keep in my mind, Mr. Race, when I thought back on what you call my 'missing chapter.' I do wish you would tell me what you think."

"I think you're the best and most unselfish—yes, absolutely selfless—chap I ever met," answered Christopher.

And to his own surprise there was a slight lump in his throat which all but made his eyes water as he swallowed it.

Mr. James Harkness sprang up and shook hands with him very hard, several times over.

"Thank you, sir!" he exclaimed. "It seems funny you should think that, you know, because, if—if it was allowed to happen, it would be the greatest honour and joy that could come to me—greater than anything I ever dreamed of: to feel *I* had done something for her—a girl like her. But what I *am* glad of is that you don't think they'd be insulted."

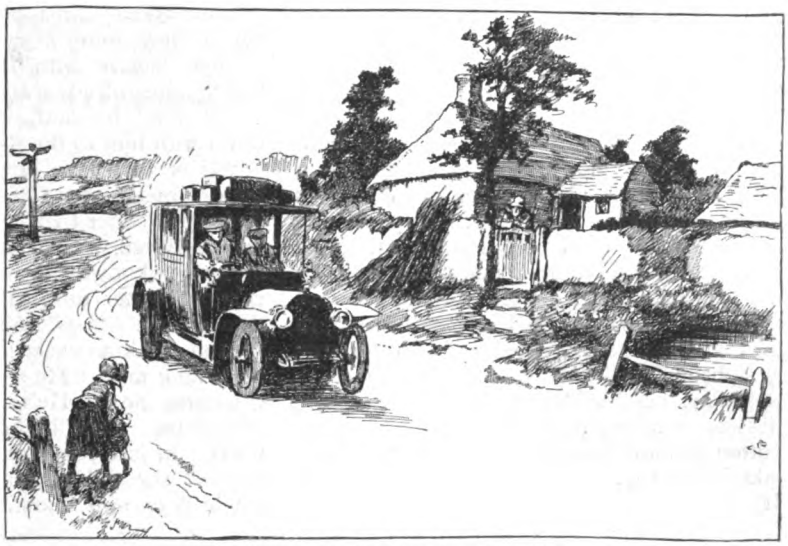
"Insulted!" cried Christopher. "Why, don't you understand you'd be risking your life, if——"

"Pshaw!" cut in Harkness. "I'm not a giant, but I'm 'most as strong as one, I guess. I can stand anything. Besides, I'd be so happy. Scot! If they would let me do it! Say, Mr. Race, would you just mention it to Miss Dalrymple as coming from me? I shouldn't have the courage to, myself, and I have her permission to tell you this story about Miss Nourma. She considers you a fine young man, and she didn't mind your knowing, as we've all been such friends together the last two weeks."

"What if—your strength should fail, and you shouldn't get through?" Christopher asked. "Mrs. Harkness would have to know, and——"

"No, she wouldn't. There'd be no good in her knowing. I've thought that out already, and how to arrange, although there's no chance, really, of such an ending. She's having a good time in France, getting acquainted with the aristocracy over there, so she's going to stay and make a few more visits. I shall get a clear three weeks, and she's happy about me, knowing I'm seeing the sights. It isn't as if I was the kind of man a woman would be what you'd call *in love* with, you see, sir; and though Mrs. Harkness does her duty by me, she's a woman who's born to be independent. And I should leave her well provided for. You'd be doing me a big favour if you *would* lead up to this with Miss Dalrymple, and find out if she could feel I was worthy."

So it came about that Christopher was induced to grant the "big favour," and Miss Dalrymple not only thought Mr. James Harkness worthy of the high honour he solicited, but agreed with Christopher in thinking some very good things about the little man's character which would have surprised the little man himself.



"THEY MOTORED BACK TO LONDON."

They motored back to London without broaching the matter to Nourma Dalrymple; but on arrival there was a consultation with the great specialist, who approved of Harkness physically as much as the others did spiritually. Then Nourma had to be told, and after the utmost difficulty persuaded to consent to the experiment which might mean life for her. That was where Scarlet Runner and Scarlet Runner's master slipped out of the story, and into another, so much more dramatic, so much more sensational in its incidents, that the strong impression graven on Christopher's mind by James Harkness's missing chapter might easily have been blurred. But it was not so. He thought constantly of the little man with the wistful eyes of a misunderstood dog and the features of a provincial Napoleon. He thought also of Nourma Dalrymple, and was as joyous as if the result had intimately concerned himself when the first news (which he had asked to have) came telling of the experiment. All was going well, so far as could be known, and it was believed that the opinion of the eminent specialist would be triumphantly justified.

Christopher had had to take up an engagement immediately after returning to London with Harkness and the two Miss Dalrymples. This called him out of town, and he did not return until nearly another fortnight had passed. His first thought after getting back was to go and see the American at a nursing home, the address of which, by request, had been given him. But Harkness was no longer there. He had got a telegram with some unexpected tidings, and, having been pronounced strong enough to move, had left at a few hours' notice. There was, however, a note for Mr. Race, in case he remembered his promise to pay a visit.

"Am just off to get rooms for Mrs. Harkness and self at Savoy Hotel," Christopher read, scribbled hastily in pencil on a shiny, thin card such as had introduced the owner to Scarlet Runner's master. "Mrs. H—— has wired will arrive sooner than she thought. Shall probably remain in London some days, as she wants to shop; and would both be pleased if you found time to call."

Nothing further. No allusion to the past or to the state of his health; no closing admonition not to speak a word which might open to eyes not meant to see a leaf of the missing chapter. Harkness trusted his new friend. He knew that such a reminder was unnecessary, and Christopher felt the more warmly drawn to the little man because of his silence.

He did call at the Savoy that day, and at such an hour as to be almost sure of finding Mr. and Mrs. James Harkness at home. He was not disappointed. They were in, and he was asked up to their private sitting-room.

If it had been Nourma Dalrymple's room she would have had it full of flowers. Flowers seemed to come of themselves where she was. But Mrs. Harkness had no such attraction for the flower-kingdom. There were flowers on the centre table, supplied by the management for one of the best suites in the house; and Mrs. Harkness had presented herself with parcels. There were boxes and bales of all sizes and shapes, just arrived from various shops; and there was Mrs. Harkness in the midst of them, a tall, bustling woman of noticeably fine figure, no particular complexion, restless light eyes, and a firm, full chin. She was the embodiment of practicality — self-satisfied, well-dressed

practicality ; and as she and her husband came forward to meet their guest, she towered over him a good two inches in height. Christopher had thought the American small, but now he seemed to have shrunk to half his original size. Was it only that he was thin, with hollows in his pale cheeks, and stooped a little as if from fatigue after a long day's shopping with his wife, or was it partly the contrast with Mrs. Harkness's imposing carriage and superior height? Christopher did not quite know ; but he did know that the brown eyes were as kind and wistful as ever, and that they lighted up with pleasure at sight of him.

"Why, yes," said the lady ; "Mr. Harkness has told me how lucky he was to have gotten you and your celebrated automobile to take him a trip. I'm very glad to meet you. It's a good thing he's seen all he wants to of

They asked Christopher to stop to dinner, which they were having early, and to go to the theatre with them afterwards, but Christopher pleaded an engagement.

"Well?" he said, when Harkness went down with him to the door.

"It is well," the other answered. "The big doctor's mighty pleased with her ; thinks she's even better than he hoped. I guess no one, not even you, can understand what that means, my knowing the happiness that's surely coming to her now will be just a tiny bit through me. Miss Dalrymple, the aunt, has written all about everything, since it's over, to the young man. He *is* a baronet. I know his name now. He's Captain Sir Everard Molyneux. She'll be Lady Molyneux. Can't you just see how happy he'll be, finding out she did care always, and why she wouldn't let him know? *She* wouldn't have

"HE APPEARS TO ME TWICE AS TIRED AND PEAKED AS HE DID BEFORE I LEFT HIM AT OUR HOME, SOME MONTHS AGO."

the country before I joined him, for I'm not partial to country myself. New York City, Paris, *and* London are good enough for me. I expect you both had a nice time, from what I've got out of Mr. Harkness, but I can't say his vacation in an auto seems to have done him much good, by the way he looks. He appears to me twice as tired and peaked as he did before I left him at our home, some months ago. But he tells me he's all right."

called him back herself, but Miss Dalrymple could tell him all right."

"So this is to be the end," said Christopher. "Love and happiness with her lover for the girl you saved ; and for you——"

"Happiness, too—the best kind. All my life is in the Missing Chapter. But it isn't missing for me. The memory of it's enough."

Then he shook hands with Christopher, and went back to his wife.

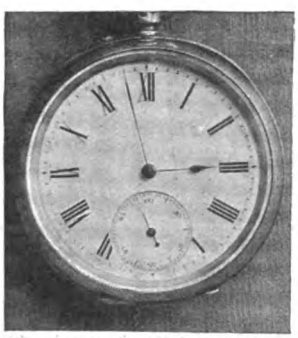
"What is the Value of Evidence?"

By PROFESSOR ED. CLAPAREDE,

DIRECTOR OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL LABORATORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA.

EVERYBODY is acquainted with the enormous part which evidence plays, not merely in historical, judicial, and scientific matters, but also in everyday life. Of all that we know there is practically nothing that has been the object of any direct investigation on our part; every notion we have has been accepted by us on the word of somebody else. At school, in the first place, apart from the few physical and chemical facts which we have ourselves observed in the laboratories, we have trusted for all our knowledge to books and masters. Except in rare instances, neither the authors of those books nor those masters themselves can have had any personal knowledge of the facts they expound to us. Those who taught us geography had very likely never set foot outside their own country; as for our historical masters, not one of them can have lived in the time of Alexander or Cæsar or even of Napoleon.

Not a day passes, indeed, on which we are not compelled to trust to what others tell us. By means of the Press a belief may be implanted in the minds of thousands, or rather millions, of men who have no means whatever of testing its accuracy. A piece of news may come either from New Zealand or from China, transmitted by means of delicate telegraphic apparatus. We have no knowledge whatever of the name or the worth of the person who reported it in the first instance, nor what is the degree of precision of the transmitting apparatus.



Most people, if asked to draw the figure VI as it appears on an ordinary watch, will attempt to do so, having never observed the fact that it does not exist.

It is needless to insist upon the important part which evidence plays in legal and political questions; on it depend not only our liberty and our honour, but our very existence. Well, then, this evidence which plays so preponderant a part that, it is no exaggeration to say, our entire social life depends upon it—*what is it worth?*

To this question the usual reply is that the value of evidence is proportionate to the value of the witness. Now, witnesses may be classed in two groups—*good witnesses*, loyal, impartial, and disinterested persons; and *bad witnesses*, who comprise all the various categories of liars.

Liars we need not stop to discuss. Any evidence they may give it is certain is of no value whatever; upon that point there can be no disagreement. An inquiry, however, which is more interesting, and, above all, more useful, is to ask ourselves whether evidence given by men of good faith really deserves the confidence with which it is usually accepted, and which is expressly accorded to it by the Codes of every country. The only thing the law seeks to do is to stimulate the good faith of witnesses, by means of the oath, on the one hand, and, on the other, by the imposition of very heavy penalties for perjury.

Now, it is sufficient to pay attention to the conversations in which we take part every day to discover that the worth of evidence depends to a very small degree on the good faith or the moral value of the witness. Who is there who has not seen for himself to what an extent accounts of the same fact may differ, even when related by serious witnesses endeavouring to scrupulously keep to the truth?

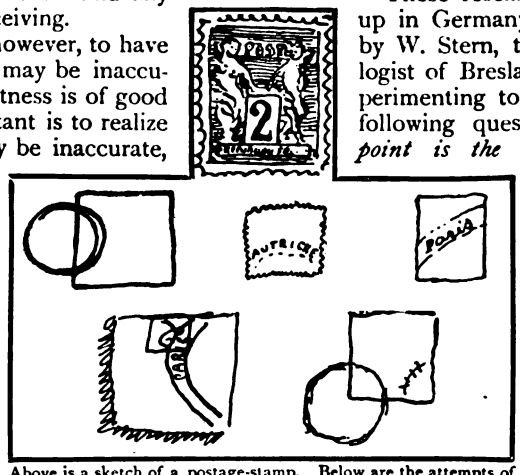
Nothing, indeed, is more difficult than to tell the truth; that is to say, to recount the past, to make a deposition upon some fact, even if the fact be one which has come a great number of times under our own eyes.

To prove that this is so, let the reader make the following simple experiment. Without any preliminary, ask a number of persons to kindly draw from memory the figure which indicates six o'clock, exactly as it appears on the dials of their watches. You will find that some of these persons will simply write the figure VI or 6; others, sharper, remembering that the figures take their line of direction from the centre of the dial, will write the symbol upside down, IA or 9. Everybody, however, will be quite convinced

that his particular testimony is correct, and ready to swear to it on oath. Now ask them to take out their watches and look at them. Most of them will discover to their stupefaction that the figure VI or IA which they saw so clearly at the foot of the imaginary watch floating before their mind's eye has *no existence at all* on the dial of the real watch, where its place is taken by the small seconds-hand dial!

Here, then, we have a great number of inaccurate depositions; and yet, how often in the course of a day do most people look at their watches! There is no doubt, moreover, that all these people whom you have thus proved to be wrong acted in perfect good faith; not one of them had any wilful intention of deceiving.

It is not sufficient, however, to have proved that evidence may be inaccurate, even when the witness is of good faith. What is important is to realize to what extent it may be inaccurate, and it is on this point that experimental psychology may be called upon to throw some light.



Above is a sketch of a postage-stamp. Below are the attempts of several children to reproduce it from memory.

Already in 1900 M. Binet, the well-known French psychologist, proved in the course of some experiments made with children how defective evidence may be, even concerning some quite recent occurrence. One of Binet's experiments was to display to some children for the space of twelve seconds a piece of cardboard to which six different objects were affixed—a new postage-stamp of the value of two centimes, a halfpenny, a price ticket of the Bon Marché shop, a picture, a bone button, and a portrait of a man. He then put the cardboard away, and immediately questioned each child about the objects which had just been put under its eyes. "Was the stamp a French or a foreign one? What was the colour of the stamp? Was the stamp new or had it been through the post?" and so on.

The number of mistakes made by the children in answering these simple questions about simple objects was considerable. In the case of the stamp, for instance, there were thirty-eight incorrect answers and only thirty-one correct. Among the incorrect answers, moreover, some were most extraordinary. Thus, several of the children who declared that the stamp was not new gave an elaborate description of what they had perceived on the postmark which covered it.

Another astonishing circumstance was that the incorrect facts were affirmed by many children with the most remarkable precision. The deduction to be drawn from this experiment is that the true and the false may be intimately blended—evidence true on one point may be quite false on another. This result is at singular variance with current notions, it being usually held that a witness is either worthy of credence or altogether without value, and that what he says must be rejected or accepted in its entirety.

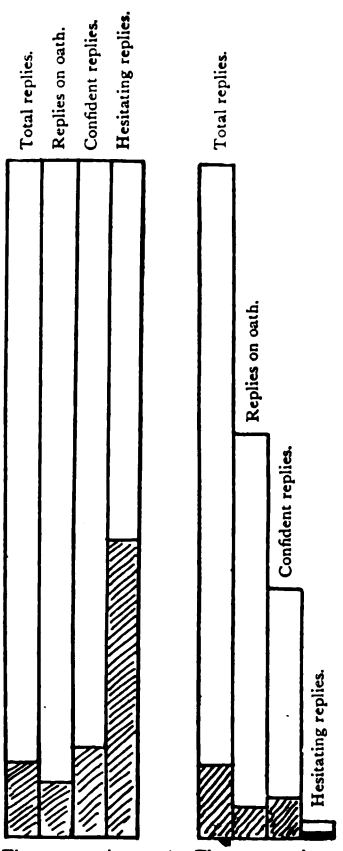
These researches have been taken up in Germany and much extended by W. Stern, the well-known psychologist of Breslau, who sought by experimenting to find an answer to the following question: "*Up to what point is the evidence of a healthy individual of good faith to be relied upon?*"

Stern's method consists of putting before a person during a longer or shorter period—thirty seconds, for example—a picture of some scene, and then asking the person to describe the picture from memory. Such experiments have given most curious results. Not only does the witness forget a great number of details, he also falsifies a number of others; and this to such an extent that Stern has formulated the law which every other experimenter has confirmed: "*Absolutely exact evidence is not the rule, but the exception.*"

What is curious and deserves great attention is the fact that the subject of an experiment often relates incorrect facts with extraordinary precision and perfect assurance. Thus, if a witness be asked to swear on oath to the accuracy of his story, we discover, often to our stupefaction, that he is perfectly ready to swear to details which have never existed but in his imagination, and which have no sort of connection with the picture. A young lady of twenty years of age, for example, who had been shown a photograph of a well-known picture by Becchi, representing an old man feeding a child, swore most positively five

months later that the old man in the picture "was feeding a pigeon," and that "another pigeon was getting ready to fly down to take part in the feast." In the picture there is no trace whatever of a pigeon! Here we perceive that the oath, however much it may enhance the value of evidence in the eyes of the law, may be very far indeed from having any real value.

If, however, in a long deposition we compare the fidelity of the evidence given on oath with that of the evidence not given on oath, we find that the former is relatively more accurate than the latter. This is shown by the diagram here given, which represents the results of experiments made in the psychological laboratory of the University of Geneva by one of my pupils, Mlle. Borst. Mlle. Borst, who had shown pictures to twenty-four persons in accordance with Stern's method, tried to find out with what degree of accuracy each answer was made. She remarked that there are three possible degrees in the certainty of an answer. It may be given with *hesitation*, with *assurance*, or it may be *certified under oath.*



The comparative correctness of different classes of replies. | The comparative quantities of different classes of replies.

The shaded portions represent the incorrect replies, and the unshaded portions the correct replies.

It is interesting to ask which of our recollections are the most exact. Are they those given with hesitation, with assurance, or under oath? We would naturally expect to find the last-named alone merited entire belief. In reality, however, the difference between these three classes, especially between the last two, is not so great as one might suppose. Out of a hundred replies given under oath, ninety-two were found to be correct; out of a hundred replies given with assurance, eighty-six; out of a hundred uncertain replies, fifty-six. In other words, the degree of fidelity of a hesitating witness may be put down as 56 per cent.; of a confident witness, 86 per cent.; of a sworn witness, 92 per cent.

In the second table here given I have shown the relative quantity of answers of each category obtained on an average, and the observations made by Mlle. Borst (in each column the black portion indicates the incorrect replies; the white portion the correct replies—that is to say, the fidelity).

Thus, out of a hundred replies obtained, 60 per cent. were sworn; 37½ per cent. were given with assurance; and 2½ per cent. were given with hesitation — results which abundantly prove the interest and utility of experiments on evidence.

It would be impossible here to give in detail all these experiments, which may be varied in a thousand different ways. We might, for instance, seek to discover whether spontaneous depositions are more reliable than depositions obtained by questioning; whether the evidence of a woman is more faithful than that of a man; whether educated persons are more to be relied upon than ignorant, adults than children, and so on.

All these experiments carried out in a laboratory, however, have one serious defect: they display evidence too favourably, and that for the reason that the conditions of everyday life are not completely fulfilled. When a witness is called upon to make a deposition about some event at which he was present, it must be remembered that he was unaware at the time of the occurrence that it was to become on some future occasion the subject of a deposition on his part. In all these laboratory experiments, on the contrary, the witness knows in advance that he is to be called upon to make a deposition about the picture he looks at; he therefore regards the picture with very great attention, and fixes its details as carefully as he can in his memory. The results given by laboratory experiments are thus far better than would be the case with ordinary evidence tendered in a court of justice.

Remembering this, I endeavoured experimentally to gather some evidence about an occurrence in which the unforeseen con-

ditions characterizing real evidence would be present. I set about it as follows. One day, during a lesson which I was giving at the University of Geneva, I distributed to my auditors, suddenly and without letting anybody know what I had in my mind, some sheets of white paper, asking them to reply on the spot to about a score of questions relating to the University buildings, which all present knew well.

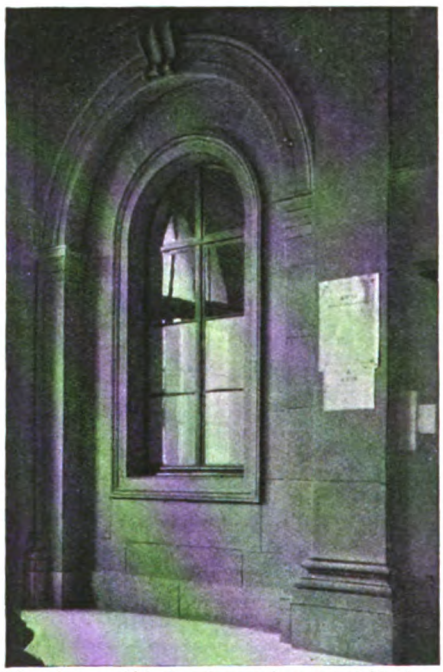
Is there an inside window opening upon the corridor of the University, as you enter on the left, facing the window of the porter's lodge?

How many columns are there in the vestibule of the University?

How many busts are there on the first floor of the University? etc.

In this way I obtained fifty-four answers (forty-one from men, thirteen from women). The results were exceedingly bad; not a single person gave evidence that was perfectly correct. Here are the results: the average fidelity of the male witnesses, 30 per cent.; of female, 23 per cent. We perceive that such evidence is not nearly so good as that obtained when the pictures were examined by witnesses who knew they were to be afterwards questioned on the subject.

The most interesting part of the experiment is the question concerning the window here reproduced. It is a window of very large dimensions, before which the students pass every day. It lights the directors' reception-room. In spite of all these favourable circumstances, the very existence of the window was denied by forty-four out of the fifty-four witnesses. Eight declared the window existed, and two only replied, "I do not know."



The window which forty-four students out of fifty-four, who passed it every day, declared had no existence.

A result such as this is very instructive. It shows us, in the first place, how great is the confidence each of us places in his own memory; when we have no recollection of an object about which we are questioned we are inclined to deny the existence of that object rather than question the faithfulness of our memory. Rather than say "I do not know" we are ready to deny.

Another and most disconcerting result is that the value of evidence is by no means proportionate to the number of witnesses, as is generally considered to be the case. If, for instance, historians for one reason or another were called upon to appraise the value of the evidence concerning this particular window, they would not fail to conclude that the window had no existence, since forty-four witnesses against eight affirmed that this was so; and yet what a mistake they would be making!

The experiment, therefore, shows us that a small minority may be right against a very strong majority, and, consequently, that the value of evidence cannot be appraised by basing oneself on a mathematical probability. The act of giving evidence is the result of some function of the brain, and it is the empirical knowledge of this function, far more than a calculation of probabilities, that will permit us to appraise the true worth of any collective deposition.

What, then, is the psychological reason why this window gave rise to such false testimony? It may be explained, I believe, by the very slight interest it offered. Though the window is by no means a small one, it plays really no part, and, so far as the students are concerned, is of no use. It is always kept closed, and the panes are of ground glass, so that the curiosity of the ordinary passer-by is in no way aroused even by the temptation to look through it.

We thus easily perceive why evidence offered in a court of justice is often so defective. In the majority of cases witnesses are questioned about facts which have no interest for them whatever, however much interest they may have for the true administration of justice.

Another question of quite as great practical importance is that of the deposition of indi-

viduals. It was for the purpose of illustrating this that I arranged the following experiment. One day—the 13th December, 1905, to be precise—a man, disguised and masked, suddenly entered the room at the University where I was lecturing, and began to gesticulate and utter various phrases, which, however, were quite incomprehensible. I ordered him to leave the room, and as he paid no heed to me I put him out.

This scene, which lasted altogether about twenty seconds, I had myself arranged beforehand, though of this not one of my auditors had any idea. The incident took place on the day after the celebration of the old Genevan patriotic *fête*, known as the "Fête of the Escalade," which is always celebrated by a masquerade. Everybody naturally believed that it was simply one of the masqueraders who had ventured into the precincts of the University in order to play a practical joke. Some students imagined it was the consequence of a bet.

Certainly at the moment the incident occurred nobody had the least suspicion that it was arranged as an experiment in order to gauge the value of evidence. The scene thus quite fulfilled the realistic and natural conditions of which I have above described the importance. After the intruder had been put out I continued my lesson as if nothing had occurred, and it was only about a week later that I first made any allusion to the incident, begging my auditors to come to my laboratory some time within the next few days, as I wished to ask them for some information about the individual in question and to obtain a description of him. Unfortunately, my auditors did not come to be questioned in as great numbers as I should have liked, twenty-five in all accepting my invitation. They made their depositions at different dates, the first on December 21st, 1905; the last on March 17th, 1906.

I need hardly say that after each witness had made his deposition I did not tell him whether he had answered correctly or not, so that it was impossible for him to give his comrades any hints as to what answers they should make. Here are the questions which I usually put to each witness. The correct reply I have placed between parentheses.

1. Was the man wearing a hat? (Yes.)
2. What kind of hat was he wearing? (Soft felt.)
3. What was the colour of the hat? (Grey.)
4. Was he wearing gloves? (Yes.)
5. What was the colour of the gloves? (White.)
6. How was he dressed? (Long linen blouse; dark trousers, almost invisible.)
7. What was the colour of the blouse? (Grey—the colour of sacking.)
8. Was he wearing a neckcloth? (Yes.)
9. What was the colour of his neckcloth? (Brown.)
10. What had he in his right hand? (A stick.)
11. What had he in his left hand? (A pipe and a blue apron.)
12. What was the colour of his hair? (His hair was not visible.)
13. How long did he remain in the room. (Twenty seconds.)

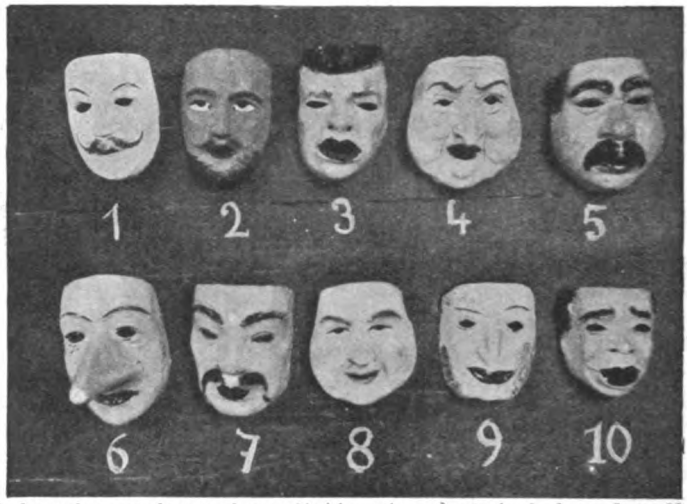
The masked figure which suddenly entered the lecture-room, and whose appearance no student could afterwards accurately describe.

As soon as the deposition was finished, I led the witness into a small room adjoining the laboratory, where I had exposed the mask worn by the individual in question surrounded by ten other masks, and I asked him to pick it out for me (among the ten masks was one of a negro, which is not reproduced in the illustration. Nobody, however, picked it out). In all twenty-five witnesses made a deposition, and twenty-three took part in the latter experiment. They comprised eighteen men, practically all of them law students, and seven women.

Although most certainly this strangely attired individual's appearance in the lecture-room aroused great attention among the students, the evidence they gave about his description was far from good. On an average, the fidelity may be put down as 59 per cent., which is better than the evidence concerning the window, but far inferior to that given in the experiments carried out in the laboratory with pictures.

It is noticeable that on this occasion the evidence given by the women was better than that given by the men (74 per cent. compared to 53 per cent.). Among the instructive facts which this experiment disclosed is the following: everybody furnished all sorts of fantastic details about the man's dress; one witness was positive that he wore long boots, another equally positive that he wore check trousers.

As for the results of the experiments with the masks, these were still more interesting. As everybody is aware, it is far easier to recognise something you have before seen than to describe it from memory. How often does it not happen that we find ourselves unable to describe with any degree of precision what is the colour of the hair or of the eyes, or the shape of the nose, of



Only five students out of twenty-three could pick out the mask worn by the figure—It was No. 8.

persons with whom we are quite familiar? And yet we would recognise these persons at the first glance were we to meet them. Yet, in spite of this facility of recognition, the experiment with the masks, which called this faculty into play, gave very bad results. Out of twenty-three witnesses, five only pointed out the correct mask (No. 8 of the above illustration), in each case very hesitatingly. Eight witnesses picked it out as one of several, generally two or three—the witness being unable to decide which of them was the right one. In most cases it was between the correct mask and No. 4, which has some resemblance to it, that the witness hesitated (yet these masks are really quite different, as the reader will perceive by looking at the second illustration). Ten witnesses did not point out the right mask at all, either by itself or as one of several. We may thus conclude that even when put in the presence of a suspected person, quite as much as in an ordinary deposition, the witness who gives evidence correctly is not the rule, but the exception.

Most students confused No. 4 and No. 8, which, as can here be seen from their profiles, were totally different.

It is evident, then, that evidence given by a man who really desires to tell the truth is far from meriting absolute belief. The point on which it is necessary to insist the most is that in practice the danger of evidence is not due to what is *forgotten*, but to what is *transformed*. The witness who declares "I do not know" is not dangerous; but the witness is dangerous who asserts that which is not, and dangerous to the utmost degree.

The whole interest of the problem is then to be found in the last-named phenomenon. Why does a witness affirm as fact that which is not true? Why is it that fantastic images arise in the mind—images which answer to nothing actually existing, but which so impose themselves upon our consciences that we take them to be real memories?

They appear to have two probable origins — association of ideas and suggestion. The tendency of every idea and every image is to evoke those ideas and those images which are usually in connection with it. When we have to recount an event, the circumstances of which we cannot quite recollect, the lapses in our memory are automatically filled up by images which we borrow from other events, more or less analogous. Thus, in the examples cited above, the probability is that the person who declared that there were two

pigeons in the photograph of the picture shown to her had on some previous occasion seen a somewhat similar picture in which there were pigeons. Similarly, children have usually postage-stamps which are post-marked. Speaking generally we may say that our mental images are completed in the direction of the probable and the usual.

This psychological law, moreover, is not special so far as our memory is concerned; it also rules our perceptive powers. Everybody is aware that we perceive—that is, we really see—much more than is immediately taken cognizance of by our organs of sense. We interpret—that is to say, we are continually completing sensible impressions by an escort of mental images, and among all these possible images the probability is that we select those which interest us the most. Here, for instance, is an example of this. The sign W, I suppose, can signify very different things according to the different situations in which we may meet with it. In a book, for instance, it will represent a letter because we complete it by various verbal images. In a caricature we will see it differently according to the *rôle* it plays, or which it pleases us to make it play.

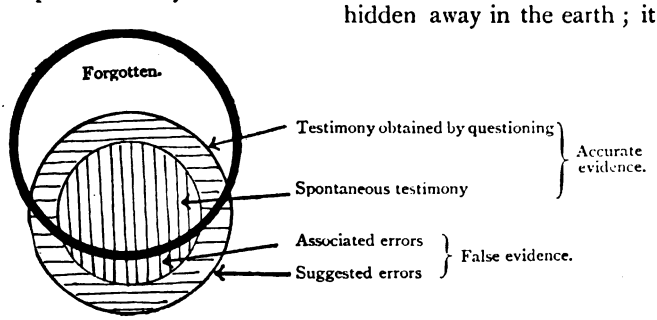
The W in these caricatures loses its identity as a letter.

As regards the second factor—suggestion; this consists of the introduction of an image in the mind of one individual by another individual. In the giving of evidence suggestion plays a most important part. The simple fact of questioning a witness, of pressing him to answer, enormously increases the risk of errors in his evidence. The form of the question also influences the value of the reply that is made to it.

Let us suppose, for instance, that some persons are questioned about the colour of a certain dog. The replies are likely to be much more correct if we ask the witnesses, "What is the colour of the dog?" than if we were to say to them, "Was the dog white, or was it brown?" The question will be positively suggestive if we ask, "Was the dog white?" To such a question the answer is probably of no value. In questioning witnesses—that is to say, in pressing them and forcing their memory—we may obtain, it is true, a much more extensive deposition than if we leave them free to answer spontaneously. Any advantage thus obtained, however, is problematical, since we lose in fidelity whatever we may gain in extent of information.

The figure reproduced below gives a graphic representation of the phenomenon of evidence. The large black circle is symbolical of the "presentation"; that is to say, the primitive vision of the object or the event about which the deposition is made. Or, if we prefer it, we may say that this large circle represents reality. Spontaneous testimony is figured by the circle marked by vertical lines, while testimony obtained by questioning is marked by the circle with horizontal lines. The parts of these depositions contained in the interior of the black circle constitute the exact portion of the evidence. Whatever is outside the black circle is false evidence, due to the imagination or suggestion. It is clear that the evidence obtained by questioning is far richer than spontaneous evidence; but that, on the other hand, it is less exact, since the part of the circle which exceeds the large black circle is relatively greater than for the circle denoting spontaneous testimony.

We may conclude from all that precedes that those engaged in taking evidence must never forget that memory has no resemblance to a safe with impenetrable sides in which our recollections remain carefully shut up. On the contrary, the impression which falls into our mind far more resembles the seed hidden away in the earth; it puts out roots and produces leaves and flowers. And it may happen that, before long, no trace can be found of the primitive seed which gave birth to all this vegetation.



The Last Hours of Exonford.

By C. C. Andrews.

THE first stroke of the hour, ringing through the silence of the sleeping house, startled Exonford, broad awake, from the uneasy slumber into which he had fallen. Cold and stiff with all the chilled discomfort of a man who has thrown himself down to sleep half dressed, and wakes abruptly in the grey of the just-breaking dawn, he stood beside the tumbled bed and listened. If the strokes seemed unnaturally loud and their vibration unnaturally deep, the time between them seemed unnaturally long. But he steadily counted them—four! So! Five, six, seven! The calculation was very easy. Plus some few minutes, not worth the reckoning, he had three hours more to live.

Shivering again as he mechanically listened, he went to the window and pushed it open. Grey in the grey dawn, there stretched one way the long, bare, dusty road by which he had come from Paris last night; almost opposite the inn was the posting-house where he had alighted. He turned his head, following the long, bare, dusty road. On the extreme verge of vision, black against the pale sky, there rose the massed shadow of trees. It was within their shadow, when the three hours should have spent themselves, that his dead body would lie. He had absolutely no doubt of it—had had none since hearing his opponent's name. The duel he had come to fight could have no ending but his death.

Leaning on the sill, with eyes withdrawn now, he recalled the scene in the cabaret last night. The quarrel had arisen in a moment. It was in sheer idle amusement that he had laughed at the excited gesticulating argument in progress between the two men at the table next his own—the extravagance of tones and movements tickled his stolid English sense, and at the fierce glare and stare with which the nearer one turned and regarded him he had involuntarily smiled again. Then there had been a silence, but in rising this same one had, with evident intention, pushed roughly against him, treading heavily upon his foot. With the stolidity of Exonford there went no coolness of temper save when he chose—the blow with which he responded had been enough to make the other stagger. The furious challenge which followed was as much a matter of course as his own prompt acceptance of it, and in a moment the whole place was in an uproar. It was as he gave his name in reply to the demand of his opponent's companion that young Willoughby, almost the only countryman whom he knew intimately in Paris, forced his way through the throng surrounding them and caught him by the arm.

"Good Heaven, Lord Exonford, you are mad to quarrel with that man!" he whispered rapidly in English. "He will kill you—'tis Gustave de Mersac!"

There were few who had not heard the name in the Paris of that day—the name of the finest swordsman and most desperate duellist in France, the fatal fighter who, when he maimed or wounded only, did so because it had not been his caprice to kill. It was impossible to hear it thus without a leap and quake of the heart, though no man was ever less a coward than Roger Exonford. But he had answered the lad with a cool smile, composedly—the quarrel was accomplished and the duel to be—would he act as his second? and, that much said, had stood aside indifferent—his English phlegm served him well. It was when the resulting talk was over and De Mersac was quitting the cabaret with his companion that he had turned back—laying a finger upon the mark that was scarlet on his cheek.

"I shall have the honour of killing you, milord!" he said, deliberately.

Exonford turned his eyes once more towards the trees. Yes, that was the place. Perhaps some faint curiosity to see it had been in his mind when he left Paris last night, leaving his young second to follow—certainly, as he looked, it arose in him now. A man with but three hours to live could surely find better use for his time than sleeping. He washed, straightened and re-tied his disordered hair, put on his coat—the only garment he had thrown off when lying down—took his hat, and turned to the door. He had opened it, when his eye fell upon his sword lying across a chair, and mechanically he buckled it on. Then he stole cautiously down the creaking stairs, and after some fumbling with locks and bolts was out upon the long, bare, dusty road.

"'I SHALL HAVE THE HONOUR OF KILLING YOU, MILORD!' HE SAID, DELIBERATELY."

Walking quickly he soon reached the trees, passed in among them, and so came upon the smooth, triangular patch of ground which they fenced. He stood looking at it with little change in his grave, handsomely-impassive face. If it was older than his years warranted, and speaking of little happiness, of much recklessness, and more folly, it was none the less the face of a man who had stained himself with neither meanness, falsehood, nor cruelty. Also it was the face of a man who, standing thus at the end of his life, said to himself that it would grieve him little to lay it down, and any other living soul not at all. So well assured was he of this last that he had not even written a farewell letter, merely charging young Willoughby to convey the news of his death to his brother and heir. For a moment he winced, frowning, picturing the great old house set in its vast Devonshire park—it was not pleasant to think of Frank reigning there—Frank and his lean, cold, white-faced wife. A sly fellow Frank had always been; his smooth, specious, tale-bearing tongue had made mischief and fostered anger between himself and his father long ago, and he had been too hot and too haughty to seek to set himself right. Perhaps he might never have drifted into the useless, wandering existence of the last half-a-dozen years had not Frank thus set the ball rolling. But he had never meant it to end like this—he had always intended to go home and marry and settle down as became the head of the Exonfords. Too late for that—too late for anything—the wasted years were past. There remained to him less than three hours of life, and then death upon the grass at his feet.

He roused himself, turning away. He had no fear, but perhaps, as he again glanced round the glade, he realized that the clutch of life might be very strong. Passing out from among the trees he hesitated; there was no reason why he should return to the inn; young Willoughby would not arrive before six o'clock—time enough if he did so then. He turned and went on down the long, bare, dusty road. It was strange to him, as was all that part of the country, but though it had not been he still might have regarded it curiously, since, but for the triangular space among the poplars, it was the last piece of the world he was to see. So he followed its slow ascent for perhaps a mile, and came to a place where it broadened out, and two massive, rusty iron gates stood open in a high, lichen-splotched wall, over which unlopped trees hung. He paused, drew nearer, looked through, and so saw the château.

It stood in the midst of a neglected park, where shrubs were unpruned, beds overrun, paths green with moss, and the broad carriage-way sweeping up to the foot of the terrace steps thickly overgrown with grass—a great, heavy, high-roofed mass of building, dark and grim, with stone towers, stone bastions, stone ornamentations of all kinds, and many blank windows which, shuttered close, seemed to stare like blind eyes at the coming day. Its

air of solitude and desolation, neglect and decay, chimed with his mood; he sauntered in. Pausing presently in the carriage-sweep, his eyes upon its melancholy front, he started with a sense of shock, seeing, as he thought, a flicker of light behind one of the shuttered windows, as of a carried lamp or candle. As he looked and wondered he started again, and his hand flew to his sword-hilt. He had heard no rustle among the trees or sound of footsteps, but in a flash two men were upon him, one on either side.

Two brothers. His glance from one handsome olive face to the other assured him of their relationship as quickly as it did that they were not, as he had supposed, about to attack him. The likeness between them extended to their attire, which was that of his own class; both were quite young, though one obviously a few years the elder. It was this one who spoke.

"It would seem that monsieur has business early," he suggested, dryly.

"Monsieur does our poor house too much honour," said the other. "The Château de St. Fleur waits usually until daylight for its visitors."

The tones were more suggestive than the words; the two were nearer than they need have been. Exonford, frowning, drew a pace back.

"You mistake, gentlemen," he said, curtly. "I have no business at the château, and I am neither thief nor visitor. If I address the master of the house——"

"We are Casimir and Jean de St. Fleur, monsieur, sons of the Marquis de St. Fleur."

"Precisely. If the Marquis requires an apology from me for having passed his open gates to look at a house seemingly empty, consider that I render it; and, having done so, permit me to bid you good morning."

His tone was blunt, making his stiff French stiffer; the language had never come easily to his obstinate English tongue. As he moved, the younger brother stood quickly in his path.

"It seemed that monsieur watched the windows," he said, suspiciously. "It is permitted that I ask him why?"

"It is certainly permitted. I watched the windows, as I passed the gates, for no reason," said Exonford.

He waited, looking from one to the other; neither spoke; with a slight shrug he turned away. Of intention he moved with a slow deliberation, conscious that the two, drawn together, were whispering rapidly. Of what did they suspect him? Would they set upon him? As, with the thought, he involuntarily turned about, the elder brother with a spring caught his arm.

"You are English, monsieur?" he demanded, hoarsely.

"Certainly I am English."

"Ah!" cried the other. "Jean, you hear? Your name? What is your name?"

Exonford had freed his arm, but not roughly; in sheer amazement he looked at the two faces that were livid and fierce with an agitation that he did not understand—he had all the usual easy insular contempt for foreign emotionalism.

"My name is at your service without violence, monsieur," he said, coldly, "and your hand on your sword may chance to bring mine from the scabbard. I do not comprehend——"

"Your name—your name!" reiterated the other, fiercely. "I demand it, monsieur!"

"And you have it. I am Roger Exonford."

Both started, both exclaimed. Bewildered, Exonford was instantly aware that his name was, inexplicably, the name they had expected to hear. The elder spoke.

"You time your coming well, monsieur," he said, suavely. "It was for the arrival of another that we watched and waited—less to be welcomed, however, than yours. You will, if you please, come to the house."

The smoothness of the tone hid neither its menace nor its mockery—plainly, was not intended to hide them. Irritated, puzzled, Exonford gave a short laugh.

"You are too obliging, monsieur," he said, curtly. "But it is not my custom to become the guest of strangers; also I have business—an appointment, shortly, which must be kept at all hazards. Your pardon, therefore, if I decline."

He moved again to go. Quickly the younger man stood in his way.

"It is at your choice whether you keep your appointment, monsieur. But first you will come to the house. You are awaited there."

"Awaited?" Exonford echoed. The elder interposed.

"Oh, most anxiously awaited, monsieur, by one who, like ourselves, had despaired of your coming. Pray have no fear of your most eager welcome. Once more, I beg you, pray honour our poor house."

The last words came hissed. Exonford looked from one to the other of the two fierce young olive faces. If he refused he would be set upon—he saw it. Was a brawl with boys worth while? Somewhere in the

dark mass of the château a clock struck five, sonorously. A sudden spasm of recklessness swept over him—as well spend one of his two last hours in seeing this play out, whatever it might prove to be. He laughed, and drove his half-drawn blade back into the scabbard.

"I am most obediently at your service, gentlemen," he said, ironically, "for an hour."

"I congratulate you upon your judgment, monsieur; the time more than suffices," said the other, with a bow. "Go first, Jean; bid them prepare—you understand, yes? And quickly."

The younger brother hurried away. Exonford found himself following side by side with the elder. Not a word was spoken as they mounted the steps leading to the terrace, crossed it, and passed in at the great door. It admitted them to a vast hall, lofty and bare and cold. All its windows were close shuttered; two candles, set in a great branching silver candlestick upon a table, lighted it dimly, their flames blowing in the draught. As they entered a tall, gaunt figure crossed its upper end, disappearing into the shadow. Exonford saw the long, flowing black robes and white-coifed head of a nun. His companion threw open a door, motioning within.

"Enter," he said, harshly. "You shall not wait long."

Exonford shrugged and obeyed. What was the next move in the play? The door was shut upon him. He stood in a large salon whose worn furnishings and tarnished draperies had once been magnificent; filled with the grey light of the pale morning, shining in through its tall, unshuttered windows, it was as desolate and dreary as the hall. Looking round it he saw no trace of recent occupancy but one thing flung across a chair—a long cloak of dark velvet, seemingly a woman's. Why was he brought there? He would have supposed it all some grotesque mistake but for the instant recognition by the brothers of his—to French ears—uncouth English name. For whom was he to wait? The person, presumably, who was declared to be expecting him. And why was the château strangely awake and stirring at such an hour? The door opened sharply, and a girl ran in.

"'I AM MOST OBEDIENTLY AT YOUR SERVICE, GENTLEMEN,' HE SAID."

So quickly, with such a blind and reckless haste, that she caught her foot in her trailing skirt and, stumbling, clutched at a table-edge. Exonford, standing in the shadow of the falling window curtain, knowing himself for the moment unseen, was able to see her clearly. Plainly she was the sister of the two brothers, for the likeness was strong, though in her the black hair was ruddy brown and the olive skin fair—so fair that the straight, dark eyebrows seemed painted upon the whiteness of her forehead. What struck him beyond her beauty—for she was beautiful—and her youth—he judged her to be younger than either — was her expression. Wild, terrified, beseeching, sullenly resigned, yet desperate—it was any and all of these, and, seen anywhere, must needs have arrested his eyes. Seen here, accentuated by her absolute pallor and the long black dress which made that pallor more intense, it forced an

involuntary exclamation from him. At the sound she turned, saw him, and with a rapid step of advance flung out her hands.

"Monsieur," she cried, "I do not ask it!"

Sheer surprise held Exonford still. The girl made another step, repeating the gesture.

"I say I do not ask it—I will not! I have said so to my brothers—I say so now, monsieur, to you. They brought you here, unwilling—would you have me beg, knowing that—I, a De St. Fleur?" With what seemed a sudden uncontrollable gust of passion she struck her hands together. "Ah, can you not speak? Are you a man, monsieur?" she cried.

She had advanced again. The pale grey light, falling upon Exonford's face as he turned, revealed it clearly, and she fell back with a gasp. "Ah!" she ejaculated. And then, all bewildered, "A stranger!"

She stood wide-eyed, her face white with amazement. Exonford bowed.

"Without doubt I am a stranger, mademoiselle, both to you and to the Château de St. Fleur equally, since until now I have had the honour of seeing neither."

"But—but you came!" she gasped. "Why did you come?"

"You have already stated why, mademoiselle. To do so seemed my only way of escaping a brawl with your brothers, which, for a reason that I have, I did not desire. As for why I am thus brought here you are perhaps better informed than I."

"They—my brothers—thought—they believed——" she stammered. Still staring confusedly she put her hand to her head. "What is your name, monsieur?"

"I am Roger Leslie, Lord Exonford, mademoiselle."

"Exonford?" The rest of the name seemed to pass her by. "*Exonford?*" she repeated. "But not Oxenford, monsieur?"

"Of a certainty, not Oxenford, mademoiselle. Nor have I, to my knowledge, heard that name."

"But—but—it is so like. And English," she stammered, bewilderedly.

"Without doubt English, mademoiselle, and certainly very like. Nevertheless, it is not mine." He hesitated. "Your brothers, I perceive, mistook me for another, known to you, but not to them. It follows that they do not require the presence of a stranger. You will permit me, therefore, to go."

"THEY WILL FIGHT YOU, MONSIEUR—PERHAPS KILL YOU—IF YOU REFUSE."

He bowed and turned towards the door. For an instant the girl stood rigid; the next she sprang and caught his arm.

"Monsieur, no!" she whispered, breathlessly. "Wait—listen! They will not believe."

"Will not believe?" Exonford echoed.

"That you are a stranger. That you are not the man they believe. They will say that you lie, and that I do. Oh, I know it well! They will fight you, monsieur—perhaps kill you—if you refuse."

"Refuse? Refuse to do what?"

"To marry me!"

"Mademoiselle——"

"Here—now! Jean is gone to awaken the chaplain—the curé. It is for that they brought you, monsieur!"

Astounded, Exonford stared at her as she let his arm go. In the absolute silence of the blank pause that followed he heard a rustle of movement beyond the door; somebody watched and waited there, it seemed. Was he, then, virtually a prisoner?

He broke the silence. "I cannot suppose you jesting, mademoiselle—I do not suppose it. But permit me to understand. Your brothers, it seems, would have you marry the man for whom they mistake me. He is, then, your affianced?"

"No, monsieur."

"Then—your lover?"

"They—say so, monsieur."

The words were whispered; her face, flaming scarlet, turned as swiftly white. Enlightened—inevitably enlightened—Exonford stood silent; again came the rustle beyond the door, with a sound of impatience in it now. The girl moved nearer, quickly.

"You ask to understand, monsieur—listen, then. But first figure it to yourself that I have lived here always—all my life with the Aunt Therese, so grey and stern, and hard and dumb, caring for her confessor and her devotions only—a nun without the veil. My father has affairs in Paris; he comes here almost never, and my brothers will not stay in a house so sad. So I see only the aunt and monsieur the curé. M. Oxenford came to the inn in the valley—he had fallen ill of a fever in Paris. I saw him first in the church as I came with the aunt from mass—he was of our religion. I did not know he followed, but I found him waiting next day by the gates—he begged my leave to enter and view the park, and I answered, why not? He came again, and many times. What harm was there to meet—to laugh a little with one not sour and old—to talk of things outside the château walls? I did not tell the aunt, and did not guess that servants spied and carried false tales of me. She sent for my father, and he came. He used to me words I cannot use. He cursed me and struck me, monsieur!"

She shuddered as she might have shuddered under the blow, hiding her face. Watching, Exonford felt that he could supply the blank of her silence. He had heard in Paris many stories of the merciless sternness, inflexible pride, and fierce temper of the Marquis de St. Fleur, whose one tenderness was for the honour of his sorely impoverished name. Had he—under such a provocation—struck his daughter dead it would have been within the character of the man. The girl raised her head again.

"He swore that the man he called my lover should marry me, monsieur, or that he would kill him and that I should take the veil. He went to the inn, but M. Oxenford was gone; he had received letters from Paris. My father sent for my brothers and left them here to guard me, and followed to find him. He cannot find him, and is coming back; in an hour may be here. My brothers were watching for his arrival when they saw you."

Her voice had sunk to a hopeless monotone. Regarding her, Exonford recalled the figure which he had dimly seen in the hall—the figure with the black nun's robe and white-coifed head.

"And you, mademoiselle? You are to take the veil?"

"I enter upon my novitiate to-day, monsieur. The Mother Superior waits here for me until my father comes. Then she will take me."

Her sudden wild gesture and half-choked cry—both plainly irrepressible—were like those of a creature caught by the throat and strangling in a trap—their agony and horror were alike piteous and dreadful. Exonford looked at her. Was her tale true or ——? True or false, she was young, beautiful, helpless, and the fate of the convent was cruel. True or false, did it matter a jot to him, who was to hear the clock strike but twice again? Surely it was well to be pitiful, so near his last hour. He approached her.

"Mademoiselle," he said, quietly, "as I have had the honour of explaining to your brothers, I can spare but an hour—your pardon, therefore, if I am abrupt. Briefly, it appears that we are caught in a trap which shuts upon us both equally, and that can be loosened in but one way. Delay will neither suit me nor serve you. I suggest, therefore, that we call for monsieur the curé."

"Monsieur, you mean——" she cried. "You would—you will——"

She stopped, voiceless. Exonford half laughed. "What else, mademoiselle? What choice have we? If I call the priest I save you from the convent. If you permit me to call him you save me from the necessity of fighting your brothers, and, very possibly, meeting my death at their hands. For the convent, it seems, you have no taste; and, indeed, I can scarce conceive of a less fitting fate for you. For a reason that I have it does not suit me, at the present moment, to die. With your permission, therefore, I will call."

He waited. With her dark, dilated eyes upon his she slowly bent her head. Exonford

"'WE ARE READY, MONSIEUR,' HE SAID, CURTLY."

strode to the door and flung it open, confronting Casimir de St. Fleur upon the threshold.

"We are ready, monsieur," he said, curtly. "Be so good as to bring the curé and such witnesses as you may prefer. My time presses."

"He is roused, monsieur, and will come immediately," returned the other.

He bowed and moved away. Closing the door, Exonford looked at the girl. She stood with her head drooping, her eyes half closed; her small hands, hanging white against her black dress, were tight clenched. Once more the force of her beauty struck him. Surely she was a figure of truth and innocence as well as beauty, if his eyes could read aright? And yet—and yet—she would bear his mother's name. Still watching her, he felt in his breast and drew out a fine gold chain, from which, suspended round his neck, hung a ring set with a cluster of pearls. From his finger he took another, set with one great flashing diamond, and approached her.

"Mademoiselle," he said, slowly, "you see this ring. It is a fine stone of the first water, a jewel of worth, therefore, and yet to me possessing no value beyond that which the veriest huckster may place upon it. But this, in itself a trifle, is far different—so different that I can scarce think of a price at which I would willingly barter it. I took it from my dying mother's hand, and have worn it since, as you see. I had hoped that it might one day be my good fortune to place it upon the hand of a woman whom she would have gladly welcomed as her daughter—a woman worthy to stand in her place. Here are they both."

"Monsieur, you ask me to—to—ah!"

She might have recoiled from a blow with such a cry as that with which she shrank from his outstretched hand — no words could adequately translate the anguish and reproach of it. Seeing, hearing, Exonford too stepped back.

"To choose the more fitting? No, mademoiselle; I ask nothing but your pardon, and beg that you will take my mother's ring, until presently, and for a moment only, I ask it of you again."

"Ah, monsieur!" she cried.

With her eyes upon him, wet suddenly, she took the ring. Had the faintest doubt of her lurked in him it must have died as he saw her put it to her lips; so a devotee might have kissed the shrine at which she knelt. Hot pity for her, hot anger against the fools who thus shamed and maligned her, rose in him. He moved nearer to her.

"May I ask your name, mademoiselle?"

"My name?" she echoed.

"If you are to marry me, I should surely know it," said Exonford, smiling.

She gave the name—Claire Yvonne Jeanne Marie de St. Fleur—and he turned to a table upon which a standish and some sheets of paper were lying. He possessed some legal knowledge, sufficient for his design, to draft a will leaving all that it was in his power to bequeath to the girl who would be for an hour his wife and then his widow. Should

he tell her how quickly she would be free? Better not; time pressed, and she would know soon enough. He felt a grim amusement as he wrote, picturing Frank's rage and discomfiture; the title, shorn bare as might be, should be all the advantage his death brought to the brother who had been always his enemy. The last words were written when the sound of footsteps in the hall made him start to his feet. As he moved to Claire's side her shaking hand caught his arm.

"Monsieur," she whispered, rapidly, "in a little while my father will arrive; he will know you for a stranger—he had seen M. Oxenford in Paris. Say to my brothers that you wish to wait for his coming. Then, without danger, you may withdraw."

"And leave you to the living death of the convent? I do not withdraw, my child," said Exonford, quietly. "Give me the ring."

Her icy fingers left it in his as the door opened for the entrance of Casimir and Jean de St. Fleur, followed by a placid, mild-eyed priest, with cassock hastily buttoned awry, still drowsy with sleep. Behind came a lady, tall and grey, her austere face set like a white mask—all the house, it seemed, had remained waking for the expected return of its master. No word was spoken, and neither brothers nor aunt glanced at the girl, or even towards her, as Exonford took her hand, though there was a whisper and rustle, as of surprise, between the former when he gave his name and title. The ceremony, as brief as might be, was over in a few minutes; the priest stumbled through some sentences of homily. Exonford stooped and kissed Claire's cold fingers. Her responses had been as steady as his own. He admired the pride and courage that, at such a pass, could so sustain her.

"To your happiness, my child," he said, quietly, "and my thanks for the honour you do me in thus giving me a hand I am proud to win." The absurdity of the thing, the pathos of it, the tragedy of it, tugged at him; it was with a laugh that he turned to Casimir de St. Fleur. "As I have already had the honour of explaining, monsieur, my time is short. Permit me to ask—do you still stand sentinel?"

It appeared that the brothers were resolved to say nothing. In silence the elder signed to the younger; he threw open the door. Ostentatiously both stood aside, leaving the way free. Exonford took up the velvet cloak from the chair and put it round the girl's shoulders.

"We are ready, then, my child," he said.

He offered her his arm and she took it. The priest stared with round, bewildered face; the rigid lady, with eyes downcast, did not deign a look as they passed out, the brothers following. The blowing candles had guttered nearly away, the light that filled the great hall from the open door was almost that of day. They were close to it when Claire gave a cry, drawing back swiftly.

"Ah," she gasped, "it is my father—see! It is the Marquis, monsieur!"

Exonford had been as quick as she to see the figure alighting from the post-chaise before the terrace. As the brothers, exclaiming, hurried by and ran down the steps, she looked at him, imploring terror in her dilated eyes.

"He will see!" she gasped again. "He will know you are not M. Oxenford. You will not leave me here? In mercy, monsieur!"

Exonford made a soothing answer and had barely time for it; the father and sons appeared in the doorway, the former in advance — the Marquis de St. Fleur was thin, lithe and quick as a boy. For a moment his handsome, sharp-cut face, sneering, white, merciless, was fixed on his daughter. Then, in his movement forward, he checked and stood still.

"What's fool's play is here?" he demanded, harshly. "This Oxenford? Of a certainty, no Oxenford! Who, then?" He turned from his sons' bewildered ejaculations. "Your name, monsieur? It is not Oxenford?—no?"

Without doubt, no, Exonford answered, though his name was, it seemed, but for a letter, the same. He was, at the service of M. the Marquis, Roger Leslie, Baron Exonford, of Devonshire, in England. For his presence there, messieurs the sons of Monsieur the Marquis would best explain it. For the reason why he, a stranger to her until now, had done himself the honour to marry Mlle. Claire de St. Fleur—it appeared that mademoiselle had no taste for the convent to which her father had been about to consign her; for himself, it chanced that it was not, for the moment, convenient to him to die. All this he said very coolly, holding always the cold hand that clung to his. The Marquis, listening with a face rigid and teeth set in his strained underlip, smiled as he finished; once more his steel eyes turned to his daughter before he doffed his hat in a sweeping bow.

"My felicitations," he said, suavely. "It is indeed—for some—inconvenient to die! You are prudent, milord; yes, a brave quality!" He paused. "And — not fastidious, monsieur!"

If the smile that pointed the words was cruel as a dagger thrust, the girl's wordless gasp was as though she had received one. Exonford moved one pace forward.

"Monsieur, you insult my wife," he said, softly.

The Marquis made a sound like laughter. Exonford moved one more pace.

"You insult my wife, monsieur," he repeated, still more softly. "The offence is worse that it comes from the man who is unworthily her father. Monsieur the Marquis, you lie!"

His sword was out of the scabbard not an instant too soon, for the Marquis, with a scream of rage, drew his own and rushed upon him. He was a good swordsman—against anything less than the fatal skill of a De Mersac capable of holding his own well; he would only defend himself; for a few passes he met and parried the furious lunges, then used a feint and trick he knew, and the Marquis's blade, struck from his hand, clattered down upon the flags.

"THE MARQUIS, WITH A SCREAM OF RAGE, RUSHED UPON HIM."

Exonford stepped back. For a moment the Marquis stood livid, breathing short and quick. Then he too stepped back. He bowed again.

"You use convincing arguments, monsieur," he said, smoothly. "I beg to offer, with all contrition, my most humble apologies to madame your wife. . . . But for that shameless jade, my daughter, her father thanks you for ridding his house of her! Take her, and begone!"

He strode across to the door; with a blow he struck it wide and pointed forth. Without a word Exonford took the girl's hand and led her out; the door shut upon them with a rasping of drawn bolts. The post-chaise still waited at the foot of the steps; he helped her into it, bidding the yawning postilions drive to the inn. In a minute they had passed the gates and were out upon the long, bare, dusty road.

No word had been spoken between them when they reached the inn. It was as Exonford took the cloak from her in the upper chamber to which the staring landlord led the way that he paused, listening, as he had done two hours ago, to the striking of the clock. More than ever was the calculation easy—one hour left! Time pressed indeed. But as he turned away, bidding her rest and sleep, some impulse made him halt and kiss her forehead, with a muttered word or two—what he scarce knew save that they blessed her. Then he went out, not seeing the questioning wonder with which her dark eyes followed him to the door.

He had caught a glimpse of young Willoughby on entering, and in a lower room found him waiting. In as few words as

sufficed to make his meaning plain he told the boy the story of the last hour, and gave him the charge he was forced to confide to him—that he should see his widow safely to England and place her in the care of his man of business in London; it was the best he could do. She would find no friend in Frank or Frank's wife, he knew well. Next, in the presence of the lad and that of the landlord, he signed his hastily-drawn will, and the two witnessed it; then wrote a letter to the lawyer briefly explaining the circumstances of his marriage and the death he was about to meet, enclosed the two documents together, and sealed them. Upon the cover he wrote a line to Claire—he had gone upon the business of which he had spoken, he told her; the packet was entrusted to her care until he should return—and sent it to her room. Then all was done, and his last hour was half sped; he took his hat and sword and went out to where young Willoughby waited by the door.

The sun had risen, and the long, bare, dusty road was bright. Exonford, as he walked, found that he was calm to sluggishness, that he was regarding, half with impatience, half with compassion, his second's pale, excited face. It was he who walked the quicker. It seemed to him as he stepped within the shadow of the poplars that all sounds of life died into silence and were gone.

It was well before the hour, but De Mersac was already there—it was his boast to be always first upon the ground. Exonford saluted him with a sensation of amusement at the other's air of confident, braggart swagger. Then he stripped off his coat and stood apart, waiting. It was as young Willoughby's agitated voice spoke at his shoulder that he fancied there grew audible the sound of wheels upon the road. He turned, facing his opponent, heard the boy utter a cry, which his fellow-second echoed, and saw Claire appear from among the trees with the swiftness of a flash of light. Staring for a moment as De Mersac stared at her wild aspect, her fallen hair and disordered dress, the next he caught her arm.

"How do you come here, child?" he said, angrily. "This is no place or business for you. Are you mad? Go back—go back!"

"I will not—no!" She wrenched herself free and put him aside; she flung herself between them and before De Mersac fiercely. "Will you kill my husband, monsieur?" she cried.

"Madame! Your husband?" De Mersac stammered, all bewildered. She stamped her foot, her eyes blazing.

"What else, monsieur? Do you not kill all whom you fight? Yes, my husband! Though I am his wife but an hour, I am not the less his wife. You shall not fight him!"

"Claire, be silent—go!" cried Exonford.

"No, no—I will not! You gave me your life when you gave me your name and your honour—he shall not take it!" She turned to De Mersac again; her voice broke into a sob. "Ah, would you have me kneel to you, monsieur?"

Her hood had dropped back; flushed, passionate, eager, she was more than beautiful. And De Mersac was a Gascon—with all his soul he loved a flourish. As she made as though she would throw herself upon her knees he flung his sword away with a clang, and caught her hand and raised her.

"But no, madame, do not kneel, I beseech you! You command and I obey—it is enough. I do not fight milord your husband—no! Rather I beg that you will suffer me to ask your pardon, monsieur."

"My pardon?" Exonford ejaculated. He stared, frowning, incredulous, angry. "I struck you, M. de Mersac!" he said, bluntly.

"Oh, monsieur—no—no!" cried Claire.

De Mersac made a gesture soothingly. "Ah, madame, have no fear, I beseech you. Milord Exonford is of England, therefore generous as well as gallant, is it not? He will not speak again of a trifle so insignificant—a thing perhaps deserved, and very certainly forgotten."

He swept a great bow, magnificently; he had a fine manner, very French. Exonford, looking from one to the other, stood for a moment dumb—the very rush and roar of life seemed in his ears again. Then he too let his sword fall.

"I return M. de Mersac his own words—he is generous," he said, slowly.

He spoke with stiffness, not too graciously, in his English way. In his French way the Frenchman responded—he found himself embraced and kissed soundingly upon both cheeks before he could draw back. The next moment De Mersac, with another deep bow to Claire, was passing out of the glade with his second; young Willoughby, in such overjoyed agitation that his boyish eyes were full of tears, following. As he disappeared the girl spoke, suddenly timid.

"Monsieur, I—I opened the packet."

"As I suppose. Why?"

"I cannot tell. But when you left me there was something in your face—I was afraid.

"I BEG THAT YOU WILL SUFFER ME TO ASK YOUR PARDON, MONSIEUR."

I can read the English although I cannot speak—I read the letter to your advocate—the letter that called me your widow. I understood—I had heard of De Mersac—who has not?—I knew he would kill you. I followed, then, to strive at least to save you!"

"Why?" asked Exonford, stolidly as before.

"Why?" She looked bewildered. "Did not you save me? And he would have killed you!"

"Without doubt he would have killed me!" He shrugged, not looking at her. "I fear that you are hardly prudent, madame."

"Prudent?" she echoed.

"It would seem not. Had you been content to leave me to De Mersac's sword you would be now what I designed to make you—my widow, and the inheritor of all that the law enabled me to give you." He half laughed. "Indeed, you are far from prudent—it would have been better to leave me to die!"

"Ah, but no, monsieur!" she breathed.

"Ah, but yes!" He laughed again, harshly. "Believe me, my child, you see a man whose life has been but a useless and wasted thing, and who was scarce worth your saving!"

"Ah, no, monsieur—never! I see only and always the friend who saved me from a fate worse than death, and the so brave and generous gentleman who trusted me!"

Her earnest voice thrilled; she had moved nearer. For the first time he looked at her.

"It is you who are generous, child," he said, in a gentler tone. "Nevertheless, it is true that as I came here I said to myself it was as well my life was over, and that the hour had come in which I laid it down."

"But the hour is past, and you live, monsieur," she said, softly.

"Yes, I live! And what of you?" asked Exonford, bitterly.

"I am your wife, monsieur," she whispered.

Exonford heard, though he did not answer; he stared across the glade. Yes, he lived, and she was beautiful and life was sweet. A picture rose before him of the old house set in its Devonshire park bathed in the mellow sunlight of such an autumn day as now was shining on the world. It waited for her and for him—wife and home, love and happiness, all that he had vaguely longed for and half despaired of, might be his, it seemed, for the stretching of his hand. From the church in the valley the clock began to chime the seven slow strokes which were to have marked his last hour. He turned and caught her by the hands.

"Why, that is so, my child, and such a wife may make any man in love with life." He met her glowing eyes and bent to the cheek that blushed but did not turn away. "And since it is so, why, it seems that I am scarce so ready to die as I supposed."

THE ROMANCE OF CRIME.

The Experiences of Two Famous Scotland Yard Detectives.

I.—Mr. JOHN SWEENEY—A Chapter of Reminiscences.

THE criminal is seldom romantic—except at a distance. Inhabitants of towns and villages near one of our great convict settlements have no illusions on this subject; every local man and woman is safer to assist the warders in recovering their prisoner, and the boycott of unpopularity awaits the friend of the convict or any who would assist his escape.

I have met murderers, anarchists, forgers, assassins, would-be regicides, burglars, garrotters, and commoner types of the genus criminal, but I have never yet met a romantic scoundrel. The criminal deserves no flattery, and current literature would be less pernicious if this fact of the essential sordidness of all crime were well drilled into the rising generation. The criminal is mostly insane, bloated with senseless egotism, and blind to the inevitable Nemesis which certainly overtakes him sooner or later. The criminal is neither heroic nor romantic; a coward generally, a fool always, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred ready to swear away the lives and liberties of every "comrade" rather than face the music himself. The romance of crime is what philosophers call a "subjective illusion." Nearly every criminal deceives himself that he is clever, when five minutes' reflection (of which he is incapable) would convince him that his plans are doomed to failure.

MR. JOHN SWEENEY, THE EMINENT DETECTIVE, WHO HAS RECENTLY RETIRED FROM SCOTLAND YARD.
From a Photo. by F. Lawson-Taylor.

In 1876 I saw a sweep steal a pair of boots, and his only idea of concealment was to imitate the ostrich, for when I searched his house he was in bed wearing the stolen boots. That was my first criminal case, but I never met a thief whose *modus operandi* was not built on similar lines, however complicated the details were made to appear, and however serious the scale of his crime. He was a lucky sweep, for a short, sharp sentence nipped his romance in the bud, and he became a commonplace, unromantic, happy, and honest citizen.

Every anarchist criminal believes himself a shining figure of romance. There are beautiful women anarchists (very few indeed), but these are not bomb-throwers. It is a curious fact that the half-dozen handsome men and women I have known in the anarchist movement have been singularly law-abiding. They seemed to have taken in advance the advice given by Edna May in her delightful burlesque of the socialist leader, "Nelly Neil"—namely, "We must never allow our noble ideas to interfere with our good looks."

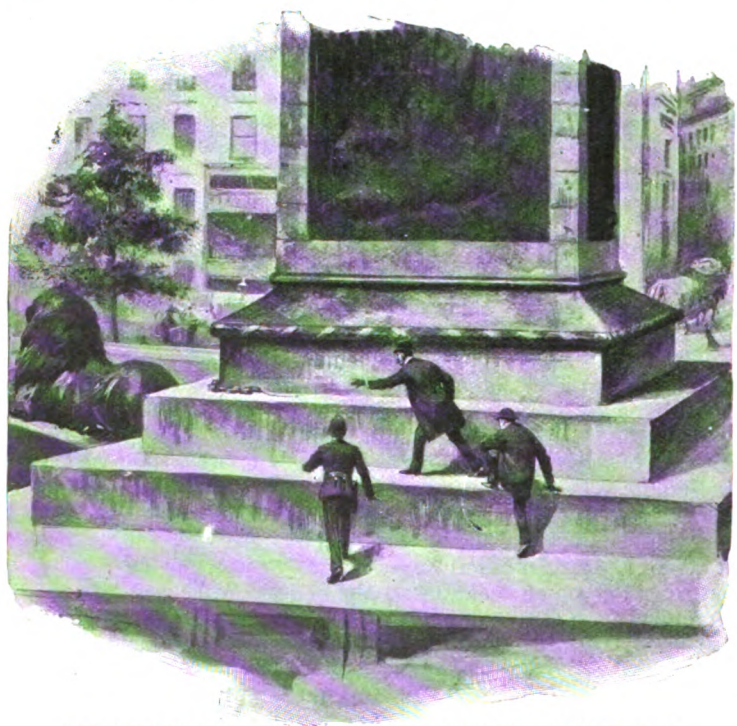
If ever one might expect to see romance in the criminal, I should have found it in those years when explosions became almost an epidemic in London. Every month a new outrage occurred, until my department had organized itself into a veritable census of anarchists, and we had an absolute watch on every individual anarchist in the country. Outrage ceased when the miscreants realized that they could not meet, however secret their club, without one or two of us being present at every meeting; that every purchase of chemicals for explosives was registered at Scotland Yard within an hour; that every new recruit to the cause and every visitor from foreign groups of anarchists became immediately aware of our acquaintance with his personality. It was an essential part of our plan to allow the shadowed recruit to realize that he was being watched, and we took pains to prove by devious ways and make him understand he could not evade us. That was where the real romance came in, but it was the romance of detection, not the romance of crime.

It has been the destiny of Scotland Yard to shatter at every turn the romance of crime woven in the insane mind of the criminal.

It would have appealed to the romantically-inclined anarchist if a precious plot in 1884 had succeeded. It occurred to a certain group of these ruffians, who met in a Soho club, that the destruction by dynamite of Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square would inflame the imagination of anarchists throughout the world and strike terror to the people of London, especially if a hundred deaths occurred, which seemed a certain accompaniment to the destructive scheme. We had news of the intended attempt through the instrumentality of spies who were members of the movement. Unfortunately, the plot was betrayed too soon owing to a natural and proper desire on the part of our spies to avert a catastrophe rather than make certain the punishment of the perpetrators. On May 30th, 1884, our organization was not in the perfection which it was my good fortune to assist in completing before the close of that year. On the date named we were early enough in Trafalgar Square to prevent an occurrence which would have "staggered humanity"—to use Kruger's famous phrase; but the anarchists had already been on the spot, and we found no fewer than sixteen cakes of dynamite attached to a time-fuse at the foot of Nelson's lofty column. The anarchist romance was more nearly successful than Londoners generally realize. Even those artistic souls who shudder at the sight of that enormous straight upright pedestal on which stands, almost out of sight, England's greatest naval hero would have been shocked at so violent a method of improvement.

On the evening of the same day an attempt was made, with far greater success, to destroy Scotland Yard, the home of detective activity. Burton and Cunningham, who were credited with this brilliant feat, were sentenced to penal servitude for life for actually dynamiting the Tower of London. The New Scotland Yard, which has replaced the gloomy, barrack-like building which the dynamitards helped to destroy, is a more cheerful and modern building, with architectural features of great artistic merit. The Tower of London could never have been replaced. While Scotland Yard was being dynamited, attempts were simultaneously being made on some West-end clubs and private mansions, so that it is safe to reckon May 30th, 1884, as the day fixed by anarchist romancers on which their millennium was to begin.

But what a squalid romance! Success at the most meant only a few innocent citizens and policemen slaughtered, and a few thousand pounds spent on rebuilding, with the addition, perhaps, of some repressive laws being hurriedly passed, and the arrest of every known anarchist. As it happened, however, that day marked the tightening of our schemes, already well in hand, of gazetting every anarchist—a scheme I have already explained in greater detail than I can do here. It was the scheme which enabled me to run to earth Battolla, Charpentier, Polti, Farnara, and many another anarchist plotter whose stories are familiar to all newspaper readers.



"WE FOUND NO FEWER THAN SIXTEEN CAKES OF DYNAMITE ATTACHED TO A TIME-FUSE AT THE FOOT OF NELSON'S COLUMN."

I was witness of many anarchist romances, but they could more properly

"AN ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO DESTROY SCOTLAND YARD."

be called mostly romances of detection rather than romances of crime. But occasional experiences of the following type might be set against years of acquaintance with sordid murders and squalid criminality.

An Austrian aristocrat, banished for political offences from his native land, had a most beautiful daughter who went with her father to anarchist clubs and meetings, where she imbibed enough of their incendiary doctrines to make her a useful advocate and worker in the anarchist cause. She fell in love with one of her comrades—an intelligent workman of more than average good looks. The affection was reciprocated, and he told her all the secrets of the group. She was silent as the grave, although her guilty knowledge extended to more than one of those outrages which startled Vienna and London in 1894. There was nothing in these things, however, which came home to her own *fiancé*, until one night she learnt to her horror that he had been chosen for his first individual act of "revenge on society." This personal aspect altered her entire point of view. Determined to save her "intended," she gave us sufficient information to enable us to frustrate the plot and to break up the gang, some of whose members are still serving their time in prison. The police raid on the club gave those members who were absent (including our two friends) a plausible excuse for hiding from their comrades as well as from the authorities. It is not always cowardice which strips the romance from a contemplated crime when the would-be criminal for the first time finds himself expected to formulate the details by which he will become an assassin. That workman and the young Austrian have been married some years now, and have given many proofs of their regret that they were ever associated with so dangerous a band.

The connection of Roland de Villiers with the anarchists has never been absolutely cleared up yet; but I have many reasons for believing that he supplied them with funds, and that his wealth was freely drawn on for anarchist propaganda after being "earned" through extraordinary frauds—and worse. The romance of this man's life would fill volumes, and I can only here raise a corner of the curtain. He has been described as a man with a hundred aliases, and more than a hundred banking accounts. He swindled his shareholders out of millions before the Whitaker Wright case had taught the public the secret of fraudulent "limited companies." His ingenuity in baffling the police knew no bounds. His palatial residence at Wembley Park was honeycombed with secret exits. He maintained a staff of private detectives for the sole purpose of watching the police detectives and guarding his own safety. His disguises were so effectual that at a time when he was turned fifty years of age he passed for thirty-two, and made love to susceptible rich women, whom he married, robbed, and abandoned. He by no means broke the record in this direction, as bigamy was merely a small detail in his life of crime. He was undoubtedly guilty of arson in connection with the fire insurance scandals which created a sensation in 1886. Leaving less guilty agents behind to face the police, he disappeared only to break out in a new

"HE WAS CHOSEN FOR HIS FIRST INDIVIDUAL ACT OF 'REVENGE ON SOCIETY.'"

place where no one ever dreamt that the pious, well-dressed "Winter" was identical with "Mathieson," the Scotsman, whose arson was even then ringing in the ears of all. Winter obtained twenty thousand pounds a year for several years, ringing the changes on the owners of various high-sounding names who, he alleged, were directors of his companies. Simultaneously with these frauds he was actually perpetrating swindles in other parts of England by long-firm methods. He kept an album of signatures (now at Scotland Yard) to assist his own memory, for otherwise he could never have kept pace with his own aliases. His wife, who had no alternative but to carry out his mysterious orders, believed that he was an honest millionaire carrying on a secret political propaganda. In all innocence she posed as his sister, little knowing that he was trading on her innocence, and that the women who, from time to time, were introduced to her were being defrauded heartlessly and cruelly in the most ignoble manner a man can rob a woman. Her cup of bitterness, indeed, overflowed at last when circumstances betrayed some of his evil habits within her own circle of friends. I prefer to say little on this side of his character.

I first sought his acquaintance in connection with a number of anarchists who gathered at the Holborn Restaurant meetings of the Legitimation League in 1897. He dodged me out of the building, anxious not to let me see his face; for at that time we only knew him as De Villiers, the anarchist millionaire.

Later he entertained Lilian Harman, the famous and beautiful American free-lover anarchist, whose father, aged eighty, has just been released from prison. His audacity knew no bounds. Surrounded by his faithful detectives he avoided actual contact with the police, so that we had no chance of recognising him. The first person to connect De Villiers with the fraudulent origin of his vast wealth was a solicitor named Wyatt Digby, whom this man was instrumental in ruining. Mr. Digby, in an unfortunate moment, had been instructed to defend a client towards whose defence De Villiers had contributed some money. De Villiers was deeply concerned in the case, but the solicitor recognised his duty only to the client he was defending, with the result that at the Old Bailey trial the prisoner was released and the judge made some scathing remarks against the real culprit, De Villiers. De Villiers, in revenge, succeeded by a plentiful supply of perjury in getting Digby struck off the rolls. Digby, in seeking for evidence against his enemy, found a clue which in our hands led us to identify De Villiers with a whole host of frauds and other crimes. He died within an hour of his sensational arrest in a secret passage of his baronial mansion in Cambridge, where he lived as Dr. Sinclair. Had he stood his trial, the evidence would have made the most famous criminal romance of our times. He was a Don Juan, Whitaker Wright, and Charles Peace in one. What romance lost by his death the world gained by being rid of a dangerous, although brilliant, scoundrel.

II.—Mr. JOHN WALSH—An Interview.

TWO million pounds' worth of stolen property recovered and three thousand men arrested—among them many of the cleverest and most desperate criminals of modern times—that is a record which, shared between half-a-dozen detectives, would suffice to give each one of them a claim to more than ordinary distinction. Considered as the work of one man alone, it stamps Inspector John Walsh, late of Scotland Yard, as a veritable Napoleon of his profession.

Thirty years of Mr. Walsh's life have gone to the compilation of this record, in the course of which, incidentally, he has been brought face to face with death over a score of times. And now he has retired from official service to establish an international detective bureau, for, with all his gorgeous opportunities, he has never "feathered his own nest."

INSPECTOR JOHN WALSH, ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT OF SCOTLAND YARD DETECTIVES, WHO HAS JUST RETIRED.
From a Photo. by Ball.

His life-story is more fascinating and interesting than any detective work of fiction. It deals with thrilling adventures and hairbreadth escapes, and captures of world-famous criminals. It brings one in contact with Royalty—with the Sovereign of nearly every nation in Europe. It takes one scurrying over the world in pursuit of murderers, counterfeiters, forgers, dynamiters, and anarchists.

Mr. Walsh is a big man. He stands six feet two inches and tips the scales at two hundred and twenty-five pounds. He is an Irishman by birth, with the typical Irishman's love of fighting, for, as he told of his "scraps" with criminals, one could not help perceiving that he rather enjoyed these contests. His eyes are small and have the quick, all-embracing glance of the highly-trained stalker of criminals. His shoulders, slightly stooped, suggest great physical strength. Hands that are large and muscular and wrists that are square bear out this impression. Altogether he is a formidable figure.

By way of drawing Mr. Walsh out, the well-known fact was mentioned that Sherlock Holmes had very little respect for Scotland Yard and its methods. Mr. Walsh smiled broadly, as he said :—

"I have very great admiration for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. He has a wonderful imagination, but it is foolish to compare his creation, Sherlock Holmes, with the detective of to-day. Everybody must know that Holmes's keys are made to fit his own locks. Put Mr. Holmes and his methods in real life, pitted against a Scotland Yard man, and, to use a racing term, he would not be one, two, three."

Mr. Walsh is probably the most famous protector of Royalty in the world. He is the favourite of kings, of queens, and princes. Immediately upon their landing in England, for many years past, it has been the practice of the British authorities to deliver Royal visitors into the care of Inspector Walsh. It speaks volumes for the thoroughness of his work that harm has never befallen a Royal person upon whom he was in attendance.

So highly is he esteemed by Royalties that the decorations he has received from them would cover his own unusually broad chest. He is a member of the Order of Christ of Portugal, a gift of the King of that country; a Chevalier of the Order of Isabel the Catholic, one of the highest honours at the disposal of the King of Spain; and a member of the Order of Merit of Greece, a present from the King of Greece. Among his gifts from Royalty are a valuable pin from the German Emperor, a pin and studs from the Czar of Russia, a gold watch and chain from the King of Italy, sleeve-links carrying the Royal monogram and a cheque for two hundred and fifty dollars from the King of Portugal, a gold watch from the Prince of Bulgaria, a diamond and emerald pin carrying the Royal initials and crown from the King of Spain, a pin from the Queen of Spain, sleeve-links from the latter's mother, Princess Henry of Battenberg, numerous presents from the late Queen Victoria, and a gold watch and chain from the Dowager Empress of Russia. Upon all these Royal personages he has

been in attendance during their various travels in this country.

"Royalties, and especially reigning Sovereigns, are in receipt of hundreds of threatening letters every week," said Mr. Walsh. "Little or no attention is paid to the great majority of them. The late Queen Victoria received a very great many, but I know that she was in no fear of assassination. I remember arresting one man who wrote threatening to shoot her at the first opportunity. This man had been in an insane asylum for seven years after shooting a man, and one day got away from his attendants. I traced him from a description and his letter, and landed him in the asylum again. I believe that he really intended to shoot the Queen.

"Royalty is not guarded so strongly as is the common belief. Usually two men are assigned, except in special cases. For instance, when the Czar of Russia visited England, all the available men at Scotland Yard were sent out to be in personal attendance upon him. His guard consisted of ten detectives in addition to his personal staff.

"BLINKEY TIM" DAVEY, ONE OF THE MOST DESPERATE SAFE-BREAKERS IN THE ANNALS OF CRIME, WHOSE CAPTURE NEARLY COST INSPECTOR WALSH HIS LIFE.

From a Photograph.

"I have been in many tight places, but I think the adventure that brought my life into most peril was the arrest of a gang of safe-breakers in the old Seven Dials, in the early days of my career. I was attached to the Bow Street station. The Seven Dials, in those days, was one of the worst places for criminals in the world, if not the very worst. Every type of crook sought refuge there.

"One of the worst gangs of this district included, among others, probably the most desperate safe-breakers in the history of crime, 'Blinkey Tim' Davey, and his partner, Morrison. The gang had committed a series of bold and successful robberies in the North of England, and had come to the Seven Dials to enjoy the proceeds. I noticed Davey at a race meeting, very flashly dressed and with plenty of money. I was known to him, so I put another man on to him, and he was followed to a house at King's Cross. Subsequent watching showed that the men entered the house only from the rear, the front being perfectly dark.

"We finally decided upon a raid, and three of us repaired to the house one night after Davey had been followed there. One man remained on the outside, while another man and I let ourselves in by a false key. As we entered we ran plump into Davey and four other men. Davey seemed to be the only one armed, and his revolver stared me right in the face.

"'Put your handcuffs on the floor,' he said, 'or you're dead men.'

"I saw there was no good delaying matters, so, making a bluff to obey, I jumped at Davey, and before he could pull the trigger knocked the revolver from his hand, and in a moment was rolling on the floor with him. My companion grabbed the gun and held the other four men at bay. I broke two of Davey's ribs in the fight, and we finally handcuffed the men and took them to the station.

"Davey was eventually identified as the man who, during a burglary in Birmingham, shot twice at a man and wounded him in the shoulder. He and one other of the gang got fifteen years, another ten, and a fourth seven. Jerry Schriven, the remaining member, was turned over to the Liverpool police, who had something against him.

"What do I consider my best job?" said Mr. Walsh, in answer to a question. "It is hard to say, but perhaps the arrest of the Russian rouble-note counterfeiters deserves that distinction. Thousands of these notes were put in circulation on the Continent by a gang composed of Russians and Poles to the number of ten, living in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and Amsterdam. So very clever were they that they successfully defied detection for many months. The leaders of this gang had been in the United States, Posinoski having 'done time' in New York and Dempski having had the same experience in Chicago.

"Eventually finding things pretty hot for them on the Continent, the gang came here, but made frequent trips between London and the big cities across the Channel. They did not attempt to pass any of their fake money here, however, and I stumbled on them quite by accident. I was at the Alexandra

Park races one day, when a well-known crook whom I knew came up to me, and, handing me what was apparently a Russian note, asked me if it was any good. It seems that he had got it from a young Russian girl, who had in turn received it from a Russian whom she had never seen before. I brought it to the City, found that it was one of the now famous rouble-notes with which the Continent was being flooded, and the quest for the counterfeiters was begun.

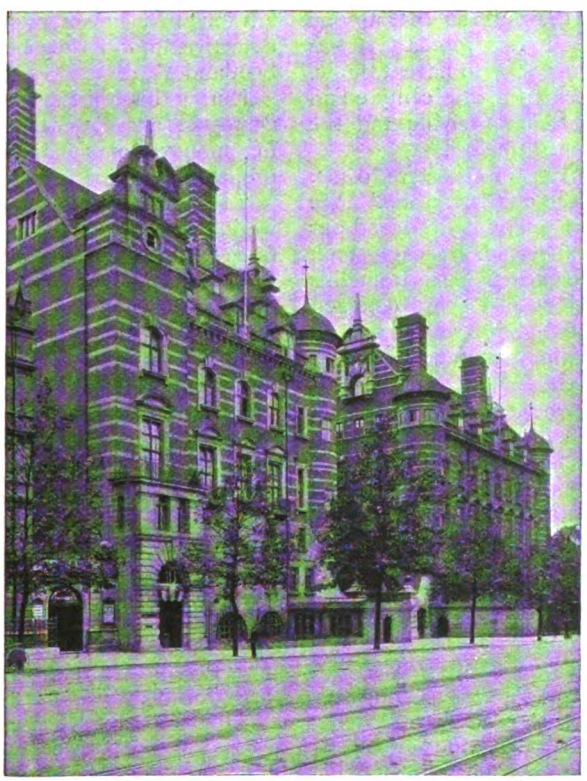
"I got in touch with the girl, and for days upon days was with her. My patience was finally rewarded when she pointed out the man who had given her the note. I followed the man to Kensington, and from that time on the house and its occupants were never unwatched. We picked the whole ten men up, one at a time, and followed them all over the Continent. Finally we had enough evidence against them to convict, and decided upon a raid of the Kensington house. Two of the gang were in Europe, but on the night we entered eight of the men were in the house. We had previously got a man in touch with the gang, and, unknown to them, had obtained impressions of the keys to the front and back doors of the house.

"Now, to understand just what happened, I must go ahead of my story and tell you that the gang had prepared against a raid in the following way. Instead of hiring only one house, as we thought, they had hired as well the two houses above them on the street. They had cut connecting doors between the three houses, but these were blind doors and could not be seen very easily. They figured on going through to the third house and thence to the street.

"Six of us entered the house, leaving some men at the front and back in case of an escape. The gang heard us and, taking the alarm, passed through the blind doors to the third house. We thought they had gone upstairs, and were about to ascend when, in the rush, I fell against the blind door and it gave way.

"'Halloa! what's this?' says I, and while three of the men went upstairs three went through the blind door into the next house.

"In the meantime the gang had attempted to leave by the front door of the third house, and had been discovered by our men waiting on the outside. The alarm was given and we all filed into the street. We got five of the gang, but Posinoski, Dempski, and a fellow named Leveshon refused to come out. The men we had captured said all three were heavily armed and had sworn not to be taken alive.



NEW SCOTLAND YARD, THE HEAD-QUARTERS OF LONDON'S DETECTIVE FORCE.
From a Photo. by George Newnes, Ltd.

"We were at a loss how to get at the men, as we were not anxious to lose our lives, until I hit on a novel scheme. Three of us went into the middle house and posted ourselves by the blind door leading into the house where the three men were hiding. Then the fire brigade was called out and a stream of water played on the house. It was not long before the three men emerged through the blind door, and were promptly captured."

Inspector Walsh's arrest of François, a famous French anarchist, was one of the most sensational in the history of crime. In this arrest he was assisted by three men from

Scotland Yard, including Superintendent Melville. François and another man named Mennier were suspected of dynamiting a café in Paris, and had escaped to England. They were desperate men, and François had sworn never to be captured alive. In telling of the arrest, Mr. Walsh said that a delay of a few moments undoubtedly saved his life, as well as that of another inspector.

"François," he said, "had taken a floor of a house at Poplar, and four of us went down there. We did not want to approach the house openly, and, as luck would have it, while we were discussing plans the tenant of the house came out. I got into conversation with him, and finally took him into the public-house in the corner. He told me that François was a very peculiar man, that every time anybody knocked at the street door he looked out of the window, and that he had taken the carpet off the stairs so that no one could go up quietly to his rooms. It was evident that we were going to have trouble, and it was finally decided that McIntyre and I should go up and that Melville and the other man should remain below.

"'One more drink,' said McIntyre to me. 'You know it may be our last, John.' We had the drink and it undoubtedly saved our lives, for, while we delayed, François took one of his very few excursions from his rooms. He passed us just as we emerged from the public-house, with an oil-can in his hand. We let him pass, and in a few minutes he returned. As he passed us I spoke to him by name, and he replied. I then grabbed him and we rolled in the gutter. He was a small man, but a perfect Samson in strength. It took all four of us to get the handcuffs on him, and to make matters worse the crowd that had gathered sided with him. There was danger of interference until I yelled, 'Don't meddle. He's Jack the Ripper.' Then we had all we could do to prevent a lynching.

"How very near we were to death we did not realize until we made a visit to François's room. The door was screwed down so that it opened but a foot—just wide enough to admit one man at a time. On a table facing the door was a fully-loaded revolver and fifteen cartridges. François told me that he was prepared to shoot us one at a time as we came into his room, and then make his escape through the rear window.

"Another case in which I had a very narrow escape was the arrest of one Dempsey, who was wanted for highway robbery. He held up a man, robbed him of fifty pounds and a watch and chain, and left him in such a condition that his life was despaired of for some time afterwards. I located Dempsey in a house in Queen Street, Seven Dials, and decided to arrest him there. He got the tip from someone and was prepared. Two of his pals stationed themselves on the roof of the house adjoining his, and, as I passed below, let a coping weighing about three hundred pounds come down. It missed me by a couple of inches, and a flying piece broke the leg of a man at my side. I did not get Dempsey that day, but I did eventually, and saw him sent away for ten years."

Inspector Walsh joined the Metropolitan Police force in 1878, and was immediately attached to the Bow Street station. Here he early won his spurs by his work in breaking up the famous "Forty Thieves" and other criminal organizations. So rapid was his advance that in six months he was made a detective, and in 1883 he was transferred to Scotland Yard.

During his thirty years in the force the aggregate amount which he has recovered in money, precious stones, plate, and property does not fall short of two millions.

"I always had an aptitude for detective work," said Mr. Walsh, "and I joined the force with that end in view. Even as a boy I was intensely interested in the solution of crime problems, and read a great deal of literature dealing with them."

Asked for an estimate of Scotland Yard, Mr. Walsh said:—

"I have travelled in almost every country in the world, and am pretty well informed concerning their police systems. Scotland Yard is undoubtedly the best in the world. I believe it is as near perfect as such an organization can be."

Referring to unsolved mysteries which had recently occurred in London, noticeably the famous "studio murder" and the "Merstham Tunnel murder," Mr. Walsh was asked if he thought Scotland Yard was as good as it used to be.

"Better," said he, "much better than it ever was before. You must know that there are cases here where it is not convenient for Scotland Yard to take the public into its confidence. I cannot tell you the inside facts, but I can say that Scotland Yard was pretty well satisfied with its investigation of these cases. Nowadays you don't hear of any big hauls being made by burglars or highwaymen, the race tracks were never cleaner or safer, and crime is steadily on the decrease."

MATRIMONIAL OPENINGS

BY W. W. JACOBS

MR. DOWSON sat by the kitchen fire smoking and turning a docile and well-trained ear to the heated words which fell from his wife's lips.

"She'll go and do the same as her sister Jenny done," said Mrs. Dowson, with a side glance at her daughter Flora; "marry a man and then 'ave to work and slave herself to skin and bone to keep him."

"I see Jenny yesterday," said her husband, nodding. "Getting quite fat, she is."

"That's right," said Mrs. Dowson, violently, "that's right! The moment I say something you go and try and upset it."

"Un'ealthy fat, p'r'aps," said Mr. Dowson, considering; "don't get enough exercise, I s'pose."

"Anybody who didn't know you, Joe Dowson," said his wife, fiercely, "would think you was doing it a-purpose."

"Doing wot?" inquired Mr. Dowson, removing his pipe and regarding her open-mouthed. "I only said——"

"I know what you said," retorted his wife. "Here I do my best from morning to night to make everybody 'appy and comfortable; and what happens?"

"Nothing," said the sympathetic Mr. Dowson, shaking his head. "Nothing."

"Anyway, Jenny ain't married a fool," said Mrs. Dowson, hotly; "she's got that consolation."

"That's right, mother," said the innocent Mr. Dowson, "look on the bright side o' things a bit. If Jenny 'ad married a better chap I don't suppose we should see half as much of her as wot we do."

"I'm talking of Flora," said his wife, restraining herself by an effort. "One unfortunate marriage in the family is enough; and here, instead o' walking out with young Ben Lippet, who'll be 'is own master when his father dies, she's gadding about with that good-for-nothing Charlie Foss."

Mr. Dowson shook his head. "He's so good-looking, is Charlie," he said, slowly;

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"that's the worst of it. Wot with 'is dark eyes and his curly 'air——"

"Go on!" said his wife, bitterly, "go on!"

Mr. Dowson, dimly conscious that something was wrong, stopped and puffed hard at his pipe. Through the cover of the smoke he bestowed a sympathetic wink upon his daughter.

"You needn't go on too fast," said the latter, turning to her mother. "I haven't made up my mind yet. Charlie's looks are all right, but he ain't over and above steady, and Ben is steady, but he ain't much to look at."

"What does your 'art say?" inquired the sentimental Mr. Dowson.

Neither lady took the slightest notice.

"Charlie Foss is too larky," said Mrs. Dowson, solemnly; "it's easy come and easy go with 'im. He's just such another as your father's cousin Bill—and look what 'appened to him!"

Miss Dowson shrugged her shoulders and, subsiding in her chair, went on with her book, until a loud knock at the door and a cheerful but peculiarly shrill whistle sounded outside.

"There *is* my lord," exclaimed Mrs. Dowson, waspishly; "anybody might think the 'ouse belonged to him. And now he's dancing on my clean door-step."

"Might be only knocking the mud off afore coming in," said Mr. Dowson, as he rose to open the door. "I've noticed he's very careful."

"I just came in to tell you a joke," said Mr. Foss, as he followed his host into the kitchen and gazed tenderly at Miss Dowson—"best joke I ever had in my life; I've 'ad my fortune told—guess what it was! I've been laughing to myself ever since."

"Who told it?" inquired Mrs. Dowson, after a somewhat awkward silence.

"Old gipsy woman in Peter Street," replied Mr. Foss. "I gave 'er a wrong name and address, just in case she might ha' heard about me, and she did make a mess of it; upon my word she did."

"Wot did she say?" inquired Mr. Dowson.

Mr. Foss laughed. "Said I was a wrong 'un," he said, cheerfully, "and should bring my mother's grey hairs to the grave with sorrow. I'm to 'ave bad companions and take to drink; I'm to steal money to gamble with, and after all that I'm to 'ave five years for bigamy. I told her I was disappointed I wasn't to be hung, and she said it would be a disappointment to a lot of other people too. Laugh! I thought I should 'ave killed myself."

"I don't see nothing to laugh at," said Mrs. Dowson, coldly.

"I shouldn't tell anybody else, Charlie," said her husband. "Keep it a secret, my boy."

"But you—you don't believe it?" stammered the crestfallen Mr. Foss.

Mrs. Dowson cast a stealthy glance at her daughter. "It's wonderful 'ow some o' those fortune-tellers *can* see into the future," she said, shaking her head.

"Ah!" said her husband, with a confirmatory nod. "Wonderful is no name for it. I 'ad my fortune told once when I was a boy, and she told me I should marry the prettiest, and the nicest, and the sweetest-tempered gal in Poplar."

Mr. Foss, with a triumphant smile, barely waited for him to finish. "There you——" he began, and stopped suddenly.

"What was you about to remark," inquired Mrs. Dowson, icily.

"I was going to say," replied Mr. Foss—"I was going to say—I 'ad just got it on the tip o' my tongue to say, 'There you—you—you 'ad all the luck, Mr. Dowson.'"

He edged his chair a little nearer to Flora; but there was a chilliness in the atmosphere against which his high spirits strove in vain. Mr. Dowson remembered other predictions which had come true, notably the case of one man who, learning that he was to come in for a legacy, gave up a two-pound-a-week job, and did actually come in for twenty pounds and a bird-cage seven years afterwards.

"It's all nonsense," protested Mr. Foss; "she only said all that because I made fun of her. You don't believe it, do you, Flora?"

"I don't see anything to laugh at," returned Miss Dowson. "Fancy five years for bigamy! Fancy the disgrace of it!"

"But you're talking as if I was going to do it," objected Mr. Foss. "I wish you'd go and 'ave *your* fortune told. Go and see what she says about *you*. P'r'aps you won't believe so much in fortune-telling afterwards."

Mrs. Dowson looked up quickly, and then, lowering her eyes, took her hand out of the stocking she had been darning and, placing it beside its companion, rolled the pair into a ball.

"You go round to-morrow night, Flora," she said, deliberately. "It sha'n't be said a daughter of mine was afraid to hear the truth about herself; father'll find the money."

"And she can say what she likes about

you, but I sha'n't believe it," said Mr. Foss, reproachfully.

"I don't suppose it'll be anything to be ashamed of," said Miss Dowson, sharply.

Mr. Foss bade them good night suddenly, and, finding himself accompanied to the door by Mr. Dowson, gave way to gloom. He stood for so long with one foot on the step and the other on the mat that Mr. Dowson, who disliked draughts, got impatient.

"You'll catch cold, Charlie," he said at last.

"That's what I'm trying to do," said Mr. Foss; "my death o' cold. Then I sha'n't get five years for bigamy," he added, bitterly.

"Cheer up," said Mr. Dowson; "five years ain't much out of a lifetime; and you can't expect to 'ave your fun without——"

He watched the retreating figure of Mr. Foss as it stamped its way down the street, and closing the door returned to the kitchen to discuss palmistry and other sciences until bedtime.

"'CHEER UP,' SAID MR. DOWSON; 'FIVE YEARS AIN'T MUCH OUT OF A LIFETIME.'"

Mrs. Dowson saw husband and daughter off to work in the morning, and after washing-up the breakfast things drew her chair up to the kitchen fire and became absorbed in memories of the past. All the leading incidents in Flora's career passed in review before her. Measles, whooping-cough, school-prizes, and other things peculiar to the age of innocence were all there. In her enthusiasm she nearly gave her a sprained ankle which had belonged to her sister. Still shaking her head over her mistake, she drew Flora's latest portrait carefully from its place in the album, and putting on her hat and jacket went round to make a call in Peter Street.

By the time Flora returned home Mrs. Dowson appeared to have forgotten the arrangements made the night before, and, being reminded by her daughter, questioned whether any good could come of attempts to peer into the future. Mr. Dowson was still more emphatic, but his objections, being recognised by both ladies as trouser-pocket ones, carried no weight. It ended in Flora going off with half a crown in her glove and an urgent request from her father to make it as difficult as possible for the sibyl by giving a false name and address.

No name was asked for, however, as Miss Dowson was shown into the untidy little back room on the first floor, in which the sorceress ate, slept, and received visitors. She rose from an old rocking-chair as the visitor entered, and, regarding her with a pair of beady black eyes, bade her sit down.

"Are you the fortune-teller?" inquired the girl.

"Men call me so," was the reply.

"Yes, but are you?" persisted Miss Dowson, who inherited her father's fondness for half-crowns.

"Yes," said the other, in a more natural voice.

She took the girl's left hand, and pouring a little dark liquid into the palm gazed at it intently. "Left for the past; right for the future," she said, in a deep voice.

She muttered some strange words and bent her head lower over the girl's hand.

"I see a fair-haired infant," she said, slowly;

"I see a little girl of four racked with the whooping-cough; I see her later, eight she appears to be. She is in bed with measles."

Miss Dowson stared at her open-mouthed.

"She goes away to the seaside to get strong," continued the sorceress; "she is paddling; she falls into the water and spoils her frock; her mother——"

"Never mind about that," interrupted the staring Miss Dowson, hastily. "I was only eight at the time and mother always was ready with her hands."

"People on the beach smile," resumed the other. "They——"

"It don't take much to make some people laugh," said Miss Dowson, with bitterness.

"At fourteen she and a boy next door but seven both have the mumps."

"And why not?" demanded Miss Dowson, with great warmth. "Why not?"

I see her apprenticed to a dressmaker. I see her——"

The voice went on monotonously, and Flora, gasping with astonishment, listened to a long recital of the remaining interesting points in her career.

"That brings us to the present," said the soothsayer, dropping her hand. "Now for the future."

She took the girl's other hand and poured some of the liquid into it. Miss Dowson shrank back.

"If it's anything dreadful," she said, quickly, "I don't want to hear it. It—it ain't natural."

"I can warn you of dangers to keep clear of," said the other, detaining her hand. "I can let you peep into the future and see what to do and what to avoid. Ah!"

She bent over the girl's hand again and uttered little ejaculations of surprise and perplexity.

"I SEE A DARK YOUNG MAN AND A FAIR YOUNG MAN. THEY WILL BOTH INFLUENCE YOUR LIFE."

"I'm only reading what I see in your hand," said the other. "At fifteen I see her knocked down by a boat-swing; a boy from opposite brings her home."

"Passing at the time," murmured Miss Dowson.

"*His* head is done up with sticking-plaster.

"I see you moving in gay scenes surrounded by happy faces," she said, slowly. "You are much sought after. Handsome presents and fine clothes are showered upon you. You will cross the sea. I see a dark young man and a fair young man. They will both influence your life. The fair young man

works in his father's shop. He will have great riches."

"What about the other?" inquired Miss Dowson, after a somewhat lengthy pause.

The fortune-teller shook her head. "He is his own worst enemy," she said, "and he will drag down those he loves with him. You are going to marry one of them, but I can't see clear—I can't see which."

"Look again," said the trembling Flora.

"I can't see," was the reply, "therefore it isn't meant for me to see. It's for you to choose. I can see them now as plain as I can see you. You are all three standing where two roads meet. The fair young man is beckoning to you and pointing to a big house and a motor-car and a yacht."

"And the other?" said the surprised Miss Dowson.

"He's in knickerbockers," said the other, doubtfully. "What does that mean? Ah, I see! They've got the broad arrow on them, and he is pointing to a jail. It's all gone — I can see no more."

She dropped the girl's hand and, drawing her hand across her eyes, sank back into her chair. Miss Dowson, with trembling fingers, dropped the half-crown into her lap and, with her head in a whirl, made her way downstairs.

After such marvels the streets seemed oddly commonplace as she walked swiftly home. She decided as she went to keep her knowledge to herself, but inclination on the one hand and Mrs. Dowson on the other got the better of her resolution. With the exception of a few things in her past, already known and therefore not worth dwelling upon, the whole of the interview was disclosed.

"MR. FOSS FOUND MR. LIPPET INSTALLED IN THE SEAT THAT USED TO BE HIS."

"It fair takes your breath away," declared the astounded Mr. Dowson.

"The fair young man is meant for Ben Lippet," said his wife, "and the dark one is Charlie Foss. It must be. It's no use shutting your eyes to things."

"It's as plain as a pikestaff," agreed her husband. "And she told Charlie five years for bigamy, and when she's telling Flora's fortune she sees 'im in convict's clothes. How she does it I can't think."

"It's a gift," said Mrs. Dowson, briefly, "and I do hope that Flora is going to act sensible. Anyhow, she can let Ben Lippet come and see her, without going upstairs with the toothache."

"He can come if he likes," said Flora; "though why Charlie couldn't have 'ad the motor-car and 'im the five years, I don't know."

Mr. Lippet came in the next evening, and the evening after. In fact, so easy is it to fall into habits of an agreeable nature that nearly every evening saw him the happy guest of Mr. Dowson. A spirit of resignation, fostered by a present or two and a visit to the theatre, descended upon Miss Dowson. Fate and her mother combined were in a fair way to overcome her inclinations, when Mr. Foss, who had been out of town on a job, came in to hear the result of her visit to the fortune-teller, and found Mr. Lippet installed in the seat that used to be his.

At first Mrs. Dowson turned a deaf ear to his request for information, and it was only when his jocularity on the subject passed the bounds of endurance that she consented to gratify his curiosity.

"I didn't want to tell you," she said, when

she had finished, "but you asked for it, and now you've got it."

"It's very amusing," said Mr. Foss. "I wonder who the dark young man in the fancy knickers is?"

"Ah, I dessay you'll know some day," said Mrs. Dowson.

"Was the fair young man a good-looking chap?" inquired the inquisitive Mr. Foss.

Mrs. Dowson hesitated. "Yes," she said, defiantly.

"Wonder who it can be?" muttered Mr. Foss, in perplexity.

"You'll know that too some day, no doubt," was the reply.

Mr. Foss assented. "I'm glad it's to be a good-looking chap," he said; "not that I think Flora believes in such rubbish as fortune-telling. She's too sensible."

"I do," said Flora. "How should she know all the things I did when I was a little girl? Tell me that."

"I believe in it, too," said Mrs. Dowson. "P'raps you'll tell me *I'm* not sensible!"

Mr. Foss quailed at the challenge and relapsed into moody silence. The talk turned on an aunt of Mr. Lippet's, rumoured to possess money, and an uncle who was "rolling" in it. He began to feel in the way, and only his native obstinacy prevented him from going.

It was a relief to him when the front door opened and the heavy step of Mr. Dowson was heard in the tiny passage. If anything it seemed heavier than usual, and Mr. Dowson's manner when he entered the room and greeted his guests was singularly lacking in its usual cheerfulness. He drew a chair to the fire, and putting his feet on the fender gazed moodily between the bars.

"I've been wondering as I came along," he said at last, with an obvious attempt to speak carelessly, "whether this 'ere fortune-telling as we've been hearing so much about lately always comes out true."

"It depends on the fortune-teller," said his wife.

"I mean," said Mr. Dowson, slowly—"I mean that gipsy woman that Charlie and Flora went to."

"Of course it does," snapped his wife. "I'd trust what she says afore anything."

"I know five or six that she has told," said Mr. Lippet, plucking up courage; "and they all believe 'er. They couldn't help themselves; they said so."

"Still, she might make a mistake sometimes," said Mr. Dowson, faintly. "Might get mixed up, so to speak."

"Never!" said Mrs. Dowson, firmly.

"Never!" echoed Flora and Mr. Lippet.

Mr. Dowson heaved a big sigh, and his eye wandered round the room. It lighted on Mr. Foss.

"She's an old humbug," said that gentleman. "I've a good mind to put the police on to her."

Mr. Dowson reached over and gripped his hand. Then he sighed again.

"Of course, it suits Charlie Foss to say so," said Mrs. Dowson; "naturally he'd say so; he's got reasons. I believe every word she says. If she told me I was coming in for a fortune I should believe her; and if she told me I was going to have misfortunes I should believe her."

"Don't say that," shouted Mr. Dowson, with startling energy. "Don't say that. That's what she did say!"

"*What?*" cried his wife, sharply. "What are you talking about?"

"I won eighteenpence off of Bob Stevens," said her husband, staring at the table. "Eighteenpence is 'er price for telling the future only, and, being curious and feeling I'd like to know what's going to 'appen to me, I went in and had eighteenpennorth."

"Well, you're upset," said Mrs. Dowson, with a quick glance at him. "You get upstairs to bed."

"I'd sooner stay 'ere," said her husband, resuming his seat; "it seems more cheerful and life-like. I wish I 'adn't gorn, that's what I wish."

"What did she tell you?" inquired Mr. Foss.

Mr. Dowson thrust his hands into his trouser pockets and spoke desperately. "She says I'm to live to ninety, and I'm to travel to foreign parts——"

"You get to bed," said his wife. "Come along."

Mr. Dowson shook his head doggedly. "I'm to be rich," he continued, slowly—"rich and loved. After my pore dear wife's death I'm to marry again; a young woman with money and stormy brown eyes."

Mrs. Dowson sprang from her chair and stood over him quivering with passion. "How dare you?" she gasped. "You—you've been drinking."

"I've 'ad two arf-pints," said her husband, solemnly. "I shouldn't 'ave 'ad the second only I felt so miserable. I *know* I sha'n't be 'appy with a young woman."

Mrs. Dowson, past speech, sank back in her chair and stared at him.

"I shouldn't worry about it if I was

you, Mrs. Dowson," said Mr. Foss, kindly. "Look what she said about me. That ought to show you she ain't to be relied on."

"Eyes like lamps," said Mr. Dowson, musingly, "and I'm forty-nine next month. Well, they do say every eye 'as its own idea of beauty."

A strange sound, half laugh and half cry, broke from the lips of the over-wrought Mrs. Dowson. She controlled herself by an effort.

"If she said it," she said, doggedly, with a fierce glance at Mr. Foss, "it'll come true. If, after my death, my 'usband is going to marry a young woman with—with——"

"Stormy brown eyes," interjected Mr. Foss, softly.

"It's his fate and it can't be avoided," concluded Mrs. Dowson.

"But it's so soon," said the unfortunate husband. "You're to die in three weeks and I'm to be married three months after."

Mrs. Dowson moistened her lips and tried, but in vain, to avoid the glittering eye of Mr. Foss. "Three!" she said, mechanically, "three! three weeks!"

"Don't be frightened," said Mr. Foss, in a winning voice. "I don't believe it; and, besides, *we shall soon see!* And if you don't die in three weeks, perhaps I sha'n't get five years for bigamy, and perhaps Flora won't marry a fair man with millions of money and motor-cars."

"No; perhaps she is wrong after all, mother," said Mr. Dowson, hopefully.

Mrs. Dowson gave him a singularly unkind look for one about to leave him so soon, and, afraid to trust herself to speech, left the room and went upstairs. As the door closed behind her, Mr. Foss took the chair which Mr. Lippet had thoughtlessly vacated, and offered such consolations to Flora as he considered suitable to the occasion.

"CONSOLATIONS TO FLORA."

"My Most Thrilling Experience."

A Symposium of Celebrated Big-Game Hunters.

AMONGST Englishmen, followers of Nimrod are probably more numerous than in any other country in the world, and this despite the fact that Britons have to go so far afield in quest of game worthy of the true hunter's prowess. And yet, so modest withal is the big-game sportsman that he cannot often be induced to narrate his adventures. Recently a large gathering of such mighty hunters sat down to a "Shikar" dinner in London, but not one of them imitated the example of Ulysses and recounted his splendid deeds of daring on the thitherward side of the sea. Yet the lives of these men have been packed with adventure; they have stalked the lion to his lair, the tiger to his native jungle; they have pursued the elephant and waylaid the rhinoceros—often at the risk of their lives—as many of them have narrated in print. None but brave men can hunt big game. He who does so carries his life in his hands.

"What was your most thrilling hunting experience?" was the question recently addressed to a dozen of the leading sportsmen in the kingdom.

SIR H. SETON-KARR.
From a Photograph.

In the opinion of SIR H. SETON-KARR, one of the foremost exponents of the art of big-game shooting, the most exciting incident of his sporting career occurred during a hunting expedition to the Rockies in 1877.

We had, writes this well-known sportsman, killed about a dozen grizzlies without any serious difficulty, and were beginning to wonder where all the "fighting grizzlies," of which we had heard so much, had concealed themselves. But an opportunity of making their acquaintance was to come sooner than we anticipated. One afternoon, when riding in search of a bear we had seen from a distance with our binoculars, we came upon an open park, in the centre of which lay a fallen tree. "There's a bear!" whispered my companion to me as a big grey head appeared over the tree. I sprang from the saddle, when suddenly an enormous grizzly jumped up on to the prostrate trunk. As I raised my rifle to shoot he sprang—a gigantic mass of claws, hair, and teeth—right at us. Just at that moment I pulled the first trigger, but the shot went over his head as he jumped down.

The situation was not a pleasant one. Here was an infuriated grizzly, actuated by the most sanguinary motives, charging downhill at a tremendous pace straight for us. I pulled the second trigger, and was glad to see the bullet go home—right in the centre of his huge shaggy chest, as we subsequently ascertained. Bruin rolled head over heels, but, regaining his feet, he continued his rush, apparently impervious to half-inch expanding bullets.

Feeling that I was figuring in some horrid nightmare, I turned and jumped desperately for the saddle. But my steed—viewing with alarm the imminent prospect of carrying a thousand pounds weight of bear upon his back in addition to his ordinary rider—swerved and bolted. The bear was now only a few yards away. Already one gigantic sinewy claw, that could with a single blow break a buffalo's back or tear out all his ribs, was raised to strike. A cold thrill ran down my spine and was accompanied by a curious sinking sensation at the pit of my stomach, which conjured up unpleasant memories of the Fourth Form room at Harrow.

But I had no time to stay and ruminate over those bygone episodes. Turning tail, I bolted up the hill in lengthy strides for all I was ever worth. My companion, who all this time had been sitting on his horse some distance away, his unloaded rifle thrown to the ground, now took occasion to empty his six-shooter at the bear. But, for all the effect his shots produced, he might as well have spared himself the trouble. The distance was too great for so small a weapon.

Pausing in my flight to glance nervously over my shoulder, I perceived that the fight was over. Grizzly, having missed his blow, was blundering aimlessly on downhill. He was obviously mortally wounded, for even an

"I TURNED AND JUMPED DESPERATELY FOR THE SADDLE."

old king of the Divide is not altogether proof against a half-inch expanding bullet crashing through his vitals.

I pulled up short, rapidly reloaded, and, putting two more bullets behind the shoulder of the bear, laid him dead at our feet. Curiously enough, returning past the scene of this adventure an hour later, I found and killed another large grizzly almost on the same spot—this time taking the bear unawares. The attraction for both animals had been a dead elk behind the fallen tree.

Lion stories are far from rare, writes LORD HINDLIP, an enthusiastic big-game hunter, to THE STRAND; yet it has not, on the whole, fallen to my lot as yet to meet with a more exciting few minutes than those which I will attempt to describe.

In the summer of 1904 I found myself for the second time in my life on the Uashingishu Plateau, in British East Africa, in the neighbourhood of a hill called Sirgiot. I had, owing to the grass being too long, hunted for several days without seeing any of the feline tribe, which I knew from previous experience to be plentiful in the vicinity. One morning, while spying out the land from a small hill near camp, I saw three lions slinking away from water, evidently just returning to their lair to sleep during the day. Camp was immediately in a state of excitement, a couple of ponies were saddled with as little delay as possible, and a stern chase began. On reaching the place where I had last seen the quarry, nothing was visible except their tracks in the wet soil near the drinking place, and we had to commence, on a small scale, practically to drive the country in the most likely direction, sending the ponies, ridden by two Somalis, on ahead.

After some considerable time we heard a welcome yell, and one mounted Somali came galloping up in a feverish state of excitement,

saying that they had found the lions, two of which had got away, but that Aidid, the other Somali, was watching the one they had rounded up. Sending the excited Somali back to assist in keeping the animal cornered, we puffed along at our best pace till we came in sight of the two horsemen circling round where our game was at bay; and going cautiously forward with my two boys, also Somalis, I got on to a small ant-hill, which gave me a view of the enraged beast at some fifty yards over the top of the long grass.

What with excitement and want of breath, my first shot from a ·370 magazine missed clean. A quick second, finding a billet in the lungs, caused the huge cat to twirl round and round two or three times, during which performance my boys stupidly fired —and, of course, missed. Then she—for it was a lioness—saw us, and, with a suppressed roar, came on. A more perfect picture of fury and rage I never hope to see. Keeping her long, lithe body low, she charged through the long grass, head out, the very personification of anger. My two boys fired their remaining barrels, missed, and waited with empty rifles, one on each side of me, like two immovable statues.

Waiting till she was within a very few feet and I felt I could not miss, I fired and jumped aside. As I did so her body hit me, and I found myself several yards away sitting up, an inch of dirt up my rifle muzzle, wondering if it was up to me to make the next move or whether my last shot had been successful. It had; the lioness was several yards behind where we had stood, and biting the grass in a death struggle; one boy was picking himself up, and the other, still standing in his place, was surveying the scene with a delighted countenance, but probably thinking with myself that a miss is as good as a mile.

The exploits of Mr. F. C. SELOUS are known all the world over. This distinguished sportsman is the author of "Travel and Adventure in South-East Africa," "A Hunter's Wanderings in Africa," and other books on big-game hunting, all of which abound in graphic narrative and stirring incident; but of his many adventures the one which Mr. Selous considers to be the most notable of his experience is concerned with a momentous night he once spent in the company of five lions in Umtali, South-East Africa.

During the night previous to the little adventure I am about to narrate, states Mr. Selous, one of our cattle was seized and carried off by a number of lions. A short distance from camp they stopped and commenced to devour their prey, but as the night was too dark to allow us to get a shot at them we were obliged, during the hours which preceded the dawn, to content ourselves by listening to the crackling sound made by these great beasts as they fell to upon their grim repast. But before the first rays of the rising sun tipped the tree-tops of the surrounding forest with silver they had abandoned their meal and slunk off into the impenetrable bush.

As I felt pretty sure that the lions would return the next night to finish off the partially-consumed ox, I decided to lie in wait for them. There was no tree near the carcass big enough to support a platform, so I decided to build a shelter on the ground. A small hut, made by first leaning three forked poles together in the shape of a tripod, and then filling in the interstices with stout saplings, all meeting at the common apex, was soon put up. This was then covered with light boughs, leaving two holes to fire through on the side of the carcass, and a small hole on the other side by way of entrance.

About six o'clock my companion, Mr. W. L. Armstrong, and I took up our positions in the hut, first blocking up the entrance-hole with a few short poles. The sun had already set, and night fell with astonishing rapidity. An hour was passed in expectant waiting, and then we heard the sound of animals treading on the dry mohoho-hoho leaves with which the ground was covered in the adjacent bush. As they cleared the bush and reached the open roadway their footsteps became noiseless. Suddenly a dark shadow loomed up a little beyond the carcass of the ox. It was impossible to distinguish its outline by the faint light shed by a two-day-old moon, but its boldness made me think it was a lion. Then two more vague and shadowy figures appeared on my right, and the foremost advanced noiselessly towards the hut. Within three feet of the muzzle of my rifle it paused, and at that moment I fired. The sharp report of the rifle rang out loudly in the silence of the night, but was instantly drowned by the terrific roaring grunts made by the wounded lion. Within a few yards from the hut was the steep bank of a small stream, and down this the stricken animal rolled, its choking gurgles showing that it was at the very point of death.

Scarcely had I slipped another cartridge into my rifle when a second animal appeared

MR. F. C. SELOUS.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

out of the darkness. I fancied it might be a hyena, and put a bullet into it at close range, but the hoarse grunting roars that followed the shot speedily convinced us that my bullet had not been wasted on a mere hyena. Like her companion, she (for it was a lioness) rolled over and fell down the steep bank into the dry bed of the stream. She had just strength enough to clamber up the farther bank and then she dropped, and after a few low moans yielded up the ghost.

A minute of intense silence passed and I began to think that our sport was over for the night, when suddenly we heard the sound of an animal's heavy breathing within a few feet of us. The next moment the hut was gently shaken, and one of the loose branches with which it was covered was torn off. It was evident that the animal was looking for an entrance to our shelter.

Try for a moment to imagine our situation.

Here was a flimsily-constructed hut consisting of a few poles fastened together, far from any protective base, and our sole protection against an unknown number of lions prowling about outside. The moon had already sunk below the tree-tops, and not a ray of light now illumined the inky blackness. To distinguish the outlines of the great beasts was impossible; our only guide to their whereabouts was their stertorous breathing, and the occasional inquisitive pat bestowed upon our fragile shelter by some mammoth paw. Branch after branch we heard impatiently snapped off, as the animal sought for the entrance. Presently he found it, and essayed to introduce his paw between the apertures. Instant action was necessary, for I knew that once our visitor endeavoured to force his head through the gaps the whole construction would inevitably come to the ground.

To prevent this I pushed the muzzle of my rifle between the poles, where I could hear them being moved, and, pointing it upwards, pulled the trigger. My shot was answered by the most terrific roaring I have ever heard in my life. The expanding Metford bullet, fired at such close range, had evidently given the lion a nasty shock. My companion, Armstrong, now fired through his opening in the direction of the roars, and the wounded beast, still roaring loudly, rushed through the bushes to the edge of the stream and fell with a splash into a shallow pool of water. Three lions in five minutes! We began to feel very pleased with ourselves. I knew there were at least two others somewhere about, but thought there was very little chance of getting in another

"THE EXPANDING METFORD BULLET, FIRED AT SUCH CLOSE RANGE, HAD EVIDENTLY GIVEN THE LION A NASTY SHOCK."

shot that night. We now spread our blankets and lay down, but not to sleep. Occasionally we would be disturbed by the sound of sniffing at the back of our hut, showing that another lion was making a tour of investigation, but we did not get a chance of having a shot at it. Between midnight and two o'clock in the morning we heard the sound of two lions tearing at the carcass of the ox. But strain our eyes as we would not a vestige of them was visible. What would I not have given for the faintest glimmer of a moon, or even for the short-lived brilliance of a decent-sized shooting star! And so the night wore away to an accompaniment of the angry snarls of the feeding lions, and a crunching and tearing sound as the ox's carcass was rapidly devoured. One by one the hours dragged their weary length, and still the lions munched and crunched, and still the veil of night remained impenetrable.

Then in the distance we could hear the cries of the hyenas as they called to one another out of the darkness. About an hour before dawn the two lions, apparently startled by something, abandoned their prey and rushed off into the bush.

A cold, grey dawn now broke and we crawled out of our hut and looked around us. We found the lion first shot lying on its back in the stream. It proved to be a very big old lioness, excessively fat, and in excellent condition. The second animal, also a lioness, was a fine animal, but not quite full grown. As for the last lion hit, it had disappeared. Large pools of blood marked the spot where it had lain during the greater part of the night. But the blood must have ceased running towards morning when it dragged itself away into the bush, and we could not follow the spoor; and although I was perfectly sure that somewhere in that impenetrable bush, within a few hundred yards of us, the animal lay dead, it was never found, and we were obliged to abandon the search. We had to content ourselves with bagging two lionesses; but with a little light and a little luck it might easily have been four.

MR. W. A. BAILLIE-GROHMAN.
From a Photograph.

There are few keener sportsmen in the kingdom than Mr. W. A. BAILLIE-GROHMAN, whose recent book, "The Land in the Mountains," dealing with the Austrian Tyrol, has been so much appreciated by travellers and others. Mr. Baillie-Grohman's talents are not confined to tracking and killing big game. He is in addition an expert marksman, and not very long ago brought off a record in quick shooting which is altogether unique in the annals of sport. It was at a chamois drive at a well-known Englishman's "Gemsjagd" in Austria, and in the presence of several keepers and drivers, he killed, with the six cartridges in a Mannlicher-Schoenauer ·256-inch bore rifle, five chamois occupying a ledge at the top of a high cliff, shooting in such quick succession (at long range) that at one moment three of the beasts were in the air tumbling down the precipice, which was many hundred feet high.

I am afraid, writes Mr. Baillie-Grohman to THE STRAND, that I have but a small stock of adventures to draw upon, and none are of the "creepy creepy" kind such as befall big-game hunters who pursue the really dangerous game of India and Africa. None of the sixteen or seventeen bears that I

bagged in the Rockies and beyond gave me the chance to depict hairbreadth escapes, though on one occasion a wounded she-grizzly came near obliging me in this respect by compelling me to shin up a tree in undignified haste. A more amusing adventure occurred to me during my first visit to the Teton Basin, on the borders of Wyoming and Idaho, nearly thirty years ago, when it was still an entirely uninhabited big-game hunter's paradise. It occurred to me while I was engaged in hunting grasshoppers to be used as a bait for the big trout for which the head-waters of the Snake River are famous. I must mention that these "bugs," as the Western man calls them, are lively animals.

"HE LOOKED THE BIGGEST GRIZZLY I EVER SAW."

They jump, dodge about, and creep out of your way with astonishing rapidity, and the only manner I could stalk them successfully was to throw my limp felt hat at them with sufficient force to stun without squashing them. Even this requires some quickness and undivided attention. Well, one day, going along with bent form, now hitting and then again missing my plump game, my whole attention being fixed upon my occupation, I reached a clump of dense service-berry bushes. I had just delivered a successful throw, and was about to stoop to gather in the prize, when out of the bushes, as if growing from the earth, there rose—a grizzly! Rearing up on his hind legs, as they invariably do on being surprised, he stood, his head and half-opened jaws a foot and a half or two feet over my six foot of humanity, and hardly more than a yard between gigantic him and pigmy me. He looked the biggest grizzly I ever saw, or want to see so close. It would be difficult to say who was the more astonished of the two, but I know very well who was the most frightened. My heart seemed all of a sudden to be in two places; for had I not felt a great lump of it in my throat, I could have sworn it was leaking out at a big rent in the toes of my moccasins.

Now, grizzly shooting is a fine healthy sport—I know none I used to be fonder of; but there ought to be trees near by to facilitate "centralization to the rear," and above all I must be handling my old "trail-stopper"—and that moment I was here on a treeless barren, *en face* with one "I was not looking for or had not lost"; and yonder, a hundred yards off, lay that famous old rifle, while in the distance my horse "Borcas" was putting some spare ground between him and that noxious intruder. Fortunately for me, the old uncle of the Rockies had probably never had anything to do with human beings, for I saw very plainly that he was more puzzled as to my identity than I was regarding his. His small pig eyes were not very ferocious-looking, and first one, then the other, ear would move, expressing, as I interpreted it, more impatience than ill-feeling. I do not exactly remember who first moved, but I do recollect that on looking back over my shoulder I saw the old gentleman actually running away from me. On regaining possession of my rifle, which on this quite exceptional occasion I had allowed to get beyond my reach, as it interfered with my "buggings," I felt considerably braver, and spent the rest of the day in a vain endeavour to resume our acquaintanceship on more satisfactory terms. But the old gentleman evidently thought he had frightened me sufficiently, and so kept out of my way.

A somewhat more thrilling adventure befell me some thirty-five years ago in Tyrol while attempting to rob a golden eagle's eyrie of its young. The nest was built in a cleft on the face of a perpendicular wall of rock nearly a thousand feet in height, about two hundred feet from the top. My eight companions—brawny woodcutters and keepers—were to lower me on a rope from the top, and, as the precipice was actually overhanging, I took with me a long pole with a hook at one end, by which I could draw myself in when I reached the level of the eyrie.

To prevent the rope being cut by the sharp rocks forming the edge a block of wood was rigged up over which the rope travelled. And as the parent birds are apt to swoop down and make things uncomfortable for the despoiler of their eyrie, one of the keepers, rifle in hand, was posted as guard. Dangling over an abyss nearly three times the altitude of St. Paul's cross was a novel sensation, but all would have gone well had not, at the last moment—when starting back after securing my two young eagles, who were already of quite a formidable size—a too vigorous pull on the part of the men above wrenched the pole out of my hand and sent me swinging outwards. This caused the block over which the rope travelled to slip from its place and to fall, flashing past me while I was swinging helplessly about. As the men did not dare to pull me up without a block, one of the woodcutters was sent down to the nearest patch of trees to fetch another suitable piece of wood. A heavy thunderstorm coming on added to the discomfort and risks of my situation, though I fortunately did not know till afterwards how nearly the man dispatched for the new block came to grief; for one of the crashing flashes of lightning struck a rock near him, stunning him for the time. Four very long hours did my "suspense" last, and for part of that period the most vivid flashes of lightning and claps of thunder, such as one hears only in the high Alps, were making somewhat awe-inspiring fireworks round me.

MAJOR-GENERAL ALEXANDER KINLOCH, C.B.
From a Photograph.

MAJOR-GENERAL ALEXANDER KINLOCH, C.B., author of "Large Game Shooting in Thibet, the Himalayas, Northern and Central India," relates an exciting adventure he had with a wild boar in India early in the year 1868.

We were, he remarks, encamped about twenty miles from Moradabad, on the Bareilly road. The country hereabouts is very flat, and at the time of which I am speaking was covered with growing corn about eighteen inches high. Lounging near our mess tent late one afternoon we were suddenly aroused by loud cries of "Jangli Súr!" Looking out we saw a large boar galloping through some shallow water about three hundred yards away. To jump into the saddle and set off in pursuit was the work of less than two minutes. I speedily overhauled the quarry, and induced him to quicken his pace, when two wretched natives who were standing in the corn attracted his attention. They turned to flee, but were rapidly overtaken by the infuriated beast, and one of them was sent flying head over heels.

Seeing me just behind him, however, the animal did not stop to damage the man further, but made off as fast as it could. I soon caught him up, and gave him three spears in rapid succession. To my horror, I found that in my haste I had picked up a blunt spear, and none of my thrusts did much harm. Each attack was followed by a determined and vicious charge on the part of the animal, which, having no spurs, I found hard to avoid. We had now reached a field of higher corn, and here the boar, turning suddenly round, charged full tilt at my horse's chest. My mount was knocked completely off its legs, and I found myself flying through space. Regaining my feet, I had just time to lower my spear when the ferocious beast rushed at me. The point glanced aside from the tough hide, I was thrown violently to the ground, and the pig continued to attack me most savagely.

My only chance now of escaping with my life was to prevent the boar from getting his tusks into my stomach; so, keeping my left hand to the front and letting him rip at it, I seized him by the foreleg with my right and tried to throw him. My efforts were ineffectual, and meanwhile the vicious beast kept cutting me with his tusks. I then tried the dodge of shamming. Lying flat on my face, and keeping perfectly still, I hoped the boar would leave me for dead. But the obdurate animal kept digging at me as

"I SEIZED HIM BY THE FORE-LEG."

savagely as ever, and I got two severe cuts on the head.

This evidently would not do, so I jumped up and, grasping my spear with both hands, drove it with all the strength I was capable of against the brute's chest. But the blunted point would not penetrate, and once again I was knocked down.

Matters were now becoming serious indeed. I was all but giving myself up for lost, when to my unspeakable relief I heard the sound of horses galloping. My shouts for help were heard, and as the riders came up the boar discreetly perceived that it was time for him to make himself scarce. I was scarlet from head to foot—my clothes cut into ribbons—and I was carried back to camp in a doolie. Altogether I had received about fifty wounds, many of them very severe, which took nearly four hours to dress. Fortunately I was in good health at the time, and within a month I was on horseback again. But the tendons of my left arm were damaged, and from that day to this I have never recovered the perfect use of my left hand.

What became of the boar? He was hunted for next day; but, though my friends found a savage boar which they failed to account for, it was impossible to say whether it was my enemy or not.

One of the many exciting incidents, writes Mr. C. V. A. PEEL, F.R.G.S., a sportsman whose trophies hail from nearly every country in the world, which I have witnessed whilst hunting big game occurred to me in Somaliland in 1895.

I had wounded a rhinoceros, and, following the spoor, I and my gun-bearers found him standing above us on a rocky slope. When he saw us he tossed his head and made a most determined charge straight for the middle of us.

Seeing him coming at a terrific pace, I yelled "Fire!" at the same time firing my left-hand barrel. The next thing I remember was seeing a huge head coming through the smoke. I was hurled to the ground as the rhinoceros struck me with his fore-feet, and as the large brute dashed past I felt the wind from his nostrils in my face. My second gun-bearer and another man had jumped aside. For a moment I was conscious of nothing but a cloud of dust and smoke and a loud rumbling of stones. When I looked up I was horrified to behold my head gun-bearer racing downhill, closely followed by the infuriated rhinoceros. I yelled out to the man to dodge aside, but straight downhill he rushed. At length he appeared to stumble just as the rhinoceros was upon him. The great brute caught the man behind with his horn, and tossed him at least five feet up in the air, my rifle, which he still carried, going up to perhaps double that height.

My gun-bearer, being a very heavy man, was turned literally head over heels in the

"I WAS HURLED TO THE GROUND."

air, and finally landed on the side of his head and shoulder through a very thick thorn bush on to the rough, stony ground. When the man fell he lay perfectly still, and I was positive he was dead.

The rhinoceros now commenced to give the man's head and side a series of terrific rams with his horn.

Although this has taken a long time to tell, the events all happened in a few seconds. Meanwhile all the other men remained crouched behind trees, calling upon Allah to save the wretched man.

Picking up my rifle as soon as I could, I rushed towards the great brute, yelling with all my might. I dared not fire at the animal below me, as I could see nothing but his head, which touched the man's body, and I was afraid I should hit the man.

I ran right up to the side of the rhinoceros and hurled a couple of stones, which hit him behind the ear. At this he stopped mauling the man and, raising his big, ugly head, stared at me as though in doubt whether to charge me or not. I got in two barrels at his broadside, and then he turned and ran off into the bushes. I now raced up to the man, whom I found alive but unconscious. His body *looked* pounded to a jelly, and he had a most terrible cut on the side of his head, but no bones appeared to be broken. I had him taken home on a camel, and then rushed after the rhinoceros. After a great deal of trouble we at last found him in rocky ground, when I went up close to him and killed him.

On getting back to camp I had plenty of work to do sewing up my gun-bearer's head and bandaging his body. He recovered consciousness about three hours after. In a fortnight's time he was crawling up to within a few feet of another rhinoceros with me.

My gun-bearer owed his life to the extraordinary roundness of the rhinoceros's horn, which was unable to penetrate the flesh; also to

From a] MR. C. V. A. PEEL, F.R.G.S. [*Photograph.*

the thick thorn bush which partly broke his fall upon the rocky ground.

The head of this rhinoceros is now to be seen in my "Big Game Museum" in the Woodstock Road, Oxford, which institution was opened in July of last year by that prince of big-game hunters, Mr. F. C. Selous.

CAPTAIN F. G. JACKSON, the celebrated Arctic explorer, the fame of whose exploits is world-wide, selects, as one of his most exciting sporting experiences, an encounter he had with a bear during his Polar Expedition to Franz-Josef Land.

About five on the morning of February 7th, 1895, remarks Captain Jackson, I was aroused by the sound of dogs barking to the west-south-west of the ship. I immediately slipped on a pair of "finsko" boots and started off with my rifle to investigate matters. After stumbling along for about two and a half miles—for the snow and the mist made the light very bad and rendered progress difficult—I at length came up to the dogs. I found them yelping and snarling around a huge bear, who from time to time made ineffectual dashes at his tormentors. I managed to get up to within ten yards of him without being observed, and from this distance succeeded in planting a bullet in the lower portion of his neck. Although badly wounded his bearship was by no means placed *hors de combat;* he dived with a splash into the water and tried to get away.

CAPTAIN F. G. JACKSON.
From a Photo. by Lafayette.

There was a thickness of about an inch of bay ice upon the water, and consequently Master Bruin found it rather difficult to swim through. Soon he abandoned the water, and started off across the floe at a good pace. I immediately set off in hot pursuit. Every now and then the bear would stop and make a savage rush at one or other of the dogs, who were harassing him greatly, but they generally managed to avoid these onslaughts.

The bear was now about sixty paces away, and as he appeared to be outdistancing me, and I was getting rather blown from my exertions, I had another shot at him. Whether it hit him or not I could not say, but he immediately swerved round and again made for the open water. I had hastily caught up three cartridges as I came out, and now had only one left, so I was naturally anxious to make certain of killing him at the next attempt. Thirty yards from the water the bear stopped, and with suppressed roars made frantic rushes at the yelping dogs. This enabled me to approach within six or seven yards, when suddenly he charged straight for me.

I fired at his head, which he carried low down, but just at that moment he threw it up, and the bullet went between his forelegs. Uttering a fearful roar, he rushed upon me, his huge jaws gaping to their widest extent. His warm breath was upon my face, his long, cruel fangs glinted in the dim light, and I could see the furious glare in his savage eyes as he dashed at me.

Half-blinded by the flash of the rifle in the darkness, I thrust the barrel with all my force down the animal's throat. My left hand entered his mouth up to the wrist, the sharp teeth inflicted several deep cuts, and the shock of the collision nearly knocked me down. I now drew the rifle back for another thrust, but the first one was evidently a trifle too much for Bruin. Turning sharp round, he made for the water, crashing his way through the thin ice with which it was covered. What would I not have given for another cartridge just then, for I could have killed him easily. But the bear managed to reach another floe about one hundred and fifty yards off, where it was impossible to get him, and I was reluctantly obliged to abandon the pursuit.

Although Mr. H. A. BRYDEN, the distinguished sportsman and author of several standard works on big-game hunting, modestly disclaims the inclusion of any hairbreadth escapes among his numerous sporting enterprises, he has, nevertheless, met with a number of intensely exciting adventures, as the following narrative testifies.

If, remarks Mr. Bryden, I were asked to point to one of my most interesting sporting experiences, I should certainly select a giraffe hunt which fell to my lot in August, 1890. After a long, hot day in the saddle we slept with our bushmen on the veldt. Next morning we resumed the chase. For four hours we had been following the spoor of a herd of "camel" (as these beautiful creatures are called in Southern Africa), but found at

"I THRUST THE BARREL WITH ALL MY FORCE DOWN THE ANIMAL'S THROAT."

length that they had got our wind and run. We now made for another part of the forest, in the rather faint hope of finding fresh spoor elsewhere. Once again we met with disappointment, and were just setting off on the long journey homewards in a very discontented frame of mind, when we spied a number of giraffes feeding under some scattered trees a good distance to the right.

Hastily putting on our cord coats as a protection against the thorn forest into which we expected the game to run, we walked our nags quietly along, so as to place ourselves between the forest and the isolated patch of bush and timber which sheltered the giraffes, For fifteen minutes we crept cautiously along, and still the quarry fed on unsuspectingly. My throat and tongue were parched and dry with intense anxiety lest the "camel" should escape us, for every instant we expected to be discovered.

At length we got to within three hundred yards of them, and an amazing and most beautiful sight met our view. Under the spreading shade of a number of acacia trees—all of them just breaking into tender greenery after the long, dry winter—stood nearly a score of tall giraffes, their long necks upstretched, and all feeding busily on the new and verdant leafage. It would, I think, be impossible to conceive a more beautiful picture of wild animal life than this bevy of gigantic game all gathered round the green camel-thorn.

Nearer and nearer we crept, scarce able to suppress our excitement, until only about two hundred yards separated us from the game. Then a tall head swung round and two liquid eyes regarded us wonderingly for some seconds. Apparently the scrutiny was not quite satisfactory, for the leader of the herd, a huge, dark old bull, began to shuffle off. Immediately all was commotion in the ranks of the nineteen beautiful giants; and, headed by the old bull, they started off at a good pace right across our front.

They were evidently making for the forest, and, as our tactics were to drive them out in the open, we also galloped obliquely to the right with the object of cutting them off. As we neared them, the sight became even more wonderful. Like tall ships rising and falling upon a troubled sea the giraffes came stringing along in line, their long necks swinging gracefully up and down like pendulums. Suddenly a large portion of the troop halted, feeling, I suppose, that they could not pass us; seven more, led by the old bull, continued gallantly on their course, and succeeded in reaching the forest unscathed. Jumping off our horses, we fired hastily at the nearest giraffes; the bullets clapped loudly, and the remainder of the herd, swinging off again, bore straight for the open plain.

MR. H. A. BRYDEN.
From a Photo by Elliott & Fry.

Off again we started in hot pursuit, our nags tearing and jumping through the low haakdorn bush which lay in our course, and caring little for the cruel thorns they bore. Here I had my left stirrup clean torn away from the saddle; and, hampered as I was by the heavy double rifle I was carrying and the rough ground we were traversing, you may imagine that I had my work cut out for me. In a few minutes, however, we reached open ground. I raced up to a young bull, which I had before hit, and gave him a shot in the stern. Breaking off sharply to the right he ran another fifty yards, then came crashing to the ground.

I now directed my course towards a very large dark cow — the biggest of the troop — who was going at a tremendous pace about two hundred yards to the left. My pony answered nobly to my call, and presently, with a wonderful and prolonged spurt, took me up to within ten yards of the big cow. Raising my rifle and aiming with difficulty, I fired twice from the saddle, my first shot hitting her in the stern, the second breaking her off foreleg close up to the shoulder. Now she reeled perceptibly as we raced up a slight incline. Then she fell behind the rest and, with a thrill of indescribable exultation, I realized that she was mine. She ran but another hundred yards, staggering as she went; faltered, tottered on again, and then, trying hard to save herself, toppled over and fell with a crash on to her left side. Jumping off, I went up to finish her. Twice she raised her beautiful head and tried to rise, but another bullet at the back of the head speedily put an end to her sufferings.

I now looked round for my after-rider. He also had killed his giraffe, and then galloping after the others brought down a young cow by a lucky shot at a distance of one hundred and fifty yards. Thus in fifteen minutes we had bagged four giraffes, a sufficiency of sport to satisfy the most ambitious hunter.

On recalling this hunt I find it difficult to say which was the most exciting part of the business — the wonderful view we had of these rare and extraordinary creatures as they fed together at their favourite acacia, or the short but intensely thrilling moments of the actual chase. But the event will always live in my memory as one of the most stirring incidents of my African career.

I ought to add that we were shooting this day to supply meat for a neighbouring village of Bakurutoe people, and that not an ounce of the flesh we had secured was wasted.

"I FIRED TWICE FROM THE SADDLE."

WITHOUT THE PALE.

By Lieutenant Hugh M. Kelly, U.S.A.

THE three men lay flat on their bellies in the road. It was not from choice that they lay thus, but because it was more healthful. A man lying close to his mother earth offers the smallest target, and there are times when this simple physical law rises and assumes an importance not to be appreciated by one who has never been shot at. Regularly from three sides of them came the pop, pop, pop of Remingtons, with, occasionally, the sharper crack of a Mauser.

Strange whispers stirred above the men; at times faintly, and then sharply, as though someone had cut the air over their heads with a whip. Sleepy, delusive whispers they were, not calculated to alarm a child; but interspersed with these same whispers were other uncanny noises—wild shrieks that tore the air like the despairing moans of lost souls; beginning with a shrill crescendo where the white spurt of dust leaped from the ground and ending in a long-drawn, quivering wail, gradually dying, dying away, so that the ear could not distinguish where the sound ended. The key of these death groans constantly varied. There was no chance for monotony. From the deep tremolo of the "G" string of the bass viol to the sharp whine of the "E" of the violin, so sharp that the ear flinched before it, the key ranged.

The little spurts of dust rose constantly; now close, now farther away; now from the limestone of the road, now from the paddy fields on each side. At times the course of a bullet could be traced for a quarter of a mile as it skipped merrily along the powdery highway, or skimmed across the top of the rice dykes.

Straight and true the white road ran for a mile through the rice fields. There was no shelter except that which could be gained by flattening like a lizard in the small inequalities of the surface. The object of these three soldiers—all that were left of fifteen—was to work their way across the open, in which they had been caught, to the cover of the bamboo and palms behind them. To prevent this, certain little brown men, lying flat on their little brown stomachs behind the little brown rice dykes, were strenuously engaged.

They were rather proud of themselves as it was, these same little brown men. They had had a good day. Twelve splendid "Krags" and ammunition to match was a prize indeed. The ugly little scoundrel who had planned the coup was already dreaming of a brigadier-general's star. Lying snugly behind a bamboo hedge on the far side of this open plain, they had allowed these big, self-assured Americanos to come on. It was proof enough of their godlike courage that they had let these immense white devils, whose sole delight seemed to be in messing around among the Filipino anatomy with bayonets and gun-butts, to get as close as *fifty yards*, and then to pot nine out of the fifteen with the first volley. So well were they concealed that the "point," or scouting party, passed without seeing them. This was very reprehensible of the "point"; but the "point" helped to settle the reckoning, for while it passed forward it never came back, and lay upon the road, three big privates and a big sergeant, glaring at the unending sky.

The six survivors fell back. There was nothing else to do. Even the most severe military critic must admit that six is too few to render offensive operations advisable against two hundred. Back across the mile of open they worked their weary way. And the crawling was very bad, for crawl they had to, every foot, or be annihilated by the hail of lead that sang over them. Their route was marked by a trail of empty, glistening shells; every halt by little piles of them, and, at intervals, sprawled three crumpled figures in blue shirts and khaki trousers. They, at least, would crawl no more, and lay as though they were very tired and needed rest.

They were now three out of fifteen, and presently, in the din of firing and whining of bullets, there was a sound as though someone had slapped a piece of dough with a flat stick, and Private Dolan laid his hot rifle down. Then he turned on his side, placed his head on his arm, and his eyes closed. His shoulders rose once or twice,

"THEY WERE NOW THREE OUT OF FIFTEEN."

then all was quiet, save that a thin, dark stream flowed from the corner of his mouth to the white dust, where it spread slowly, as ink spreads on a blotter. Private Dolan had gone to sleep, and the three were two.

They were strong men, these two—strong in body and strong in spirit. On the shirt-sleeve of the taller a section of chevron proclaimed to the rice dykes and paddy fields that he was a corporal. Though this little indication of rank was now red and not white, the corporal was of the infantry. He had dyed the thing himself a few moments before, and the colour was deepening constantly. Three cartridge belts, those of the tired men on the road in front, were slung about his person, and, methodically, he abstracted the shells one at a time, and spat them through the hot tube in his hands at the aforesaid chocolate-coloured pieces of humanity who surrounded them on three sides. Underneath the sweat-drenched shirt the muscles of his back coiled and twitched as his arm manipulated the bolt of the rifle.

His face was clear and serene—the face of a strong man who had met agony of spirit and conquered it; but in the winning of the fight certain lines had grown and left the countenance grim and very weary. A gory "fust-aid" bandage encircled his head.

The corporal's duty was to hold back the right-hand quadrant of the semicircle that threatened to envelop them, and discourage any attempts of that same quadrant to grow into another semicircle, and so surround them.

When there was danger of being thus flanked they would be forced to crawl back along the road. Shooting was much easier than crawling, as his elbows and knees were already through his clothes, and raw and bleeding.

The other man was an officer. He, too, was a strong man, with features clearly cut, and a pair of grey eyes that glanced along the rifle sights from either side of a fine, straight nose. From a long, angry seam across the cheek a thin red line trickled to the big chin, from which thick drops slowly fell and spattered on his bare arms. The officer's face was as determined as the soldier's; but it was not a scrupulous face, nor that of one who would allow any thought of others to stand in the way of the attainment of a desire. It was not so thin as the enlisted man's, and his life had evidently been one of happy contentment. The corporal's face was that of one who was striving for a peace that he could not find; the officer's countenance told of the existence of that peace. He was struggling, if anything, harder than the other to put a period of certain death to his quadrant of the semicircle.

He fought more earnestly and faster than

the corporal, and evidently had not the slightest desire to die. He fired rapidly, and constantly measured the distance behind him to the shelter of the grove. Never once did the corporal look back. It was plain that he did not care a straw whether he died now or another time.

Thus they lay in the popping, scorching hail that swept over and around them. The shrivelling heat played about them in waves, and eddies of dust raised by the bullets and the hot breeze powdered their scorched bodies. Dolan lay quietly between them.

There was suddenly a lull in the attack, and during this the corporal slipped the belt off the private's still form and added it to his own collection.

"Well, I guess we shall have to move, lieutenant. They are cutting in on us right and left," and leaving Dolan, his face decently covered with his battered hat, the two crawled away.

They gained three hundred yards before they were forced to stop and loose sudden death upon the white-clad imps that were pursuing them. The enemy saw that the soldiers' effective force was reduced by thirty-three and a third per cent., and grew very courageous. They began to advance by rushes in small bunches of three or four. This was the beginning of the end. The dust was thrown over the two in clouds, and the fiendish whispers, moans, and howls that lashed the air around told how the fire was increasing.

They had hardly got settled in a small carabao wallow beside the road when there were two sharp spats, and the lieutenant's elbows collapsed under him so suddenly that his chin struck the ground. Two hundred and twenty grains of lead had crashed through his body at the shoulders; the next instant ditto through both his hips. The corporal looked around between shots and smiled grimly. The sight of his erstwhile commanding officer rolling in ensanguined mud of his own manufacture appeared to amuse him immensely.

"Help me! help me!" choked the wounded man, his face buried in the dust of the road; "I'm smothering."

"Help yourself! What's the matter? Don't you like the taste of dust? It's not pleasant, is it? But never fear, you will get used to it. I know; I've eaten dust myself for the last five years." Nevertheless, the corporal gave the man behind him a kick and turned his body over. A terrible groan of pain answered this rough treatment. The corporal continued, sarcastically, between his rapid shots: "What's the trouble, Danny? A person would think

"WHAT'S THE TROUBLE, DANNY? A PERSON WOULD THINK YOU WERE IN PAIN."

you were in pain. Come, come, be a man; you have quite ten minutes yet to live, if I can keep these fiends back that long."

At the sound of his name spoken in that manner the officer turned over with a start, in spite of his wounds. He raised himself on his blood-smeared elbows, his jaw dropped down, his lips hanging loosely, his head wabbling foolishly from side to side as he endeavoured to fix his wandering gaze on the other.

"Who—who are you, man?" he cried, glaring with wide, startled eyes.

"Why, Anderson, is it possible that you don't recognise an old friend?" and the soldier looked back over his shoulder with cold, level glance. "Perhaps it's because my moustache is gone. It makes a great difference in some people."

"It's Weston"; and the officer's arms crumpled under him again, his head striking the ground with a thump. He lay with his eyes rolled upward so as to keep his feverish gaze on the man in front of him, his laboured breathing blowing up little clouds of dust that fell back on his already parched lips.

"Yes, it's Weston. Surprised to see me, aren't you? It is a trifle informal, I admit. Rather irregular, too. You will remember that, according to the One Hundredth Article of War,* it is scandalous to associate with me. You will probably have to explain, in writing, to the Adjutant-General."

A shuddering moan was all the answer he received.

"You hardly expected ever to see me again, did you? But I have waited quite a considerable time for this moment. Five years of living torment, and patience ceases to be a virtue worth troubling about. I had an idea, though, that I could see my hour coming when I volunteered for this trip. I was rather disturbed just now for fear that our brown brothers were going to beat me to it, but the luck seemed to be mine. You probably thought that I was looking for a medal of honour when I jumped in and took this bolo cut on my arm to save you the inconvenience; but it is my private opinion that before our little interview is over you will wish you had got it. Then one by one they left us, until now we are alone, you and I and death. Rather melodramatic situation, you must admit; but you can take my word for it—it is nothing to what is coming. Five years is a long time to wait, but unless I am mistaken the finale is going to justify the prelude."

The man's voice quivered with intense excitement and he laughed a short, hard laugh, like a file on metal. His words were interspersed with rapid shots, for the enemy was closing in on them surely. His cool eyes turned swiftly from side to side, and every white form that showed itself was greeted with a venomous crack. The natives bided their time now and came more slowly, as they knew that the end was at hand. This lying out and fighting at a distance, with overwhelming odds in their favour, was good sport. Why hurry the game?

The wounded officer stirred uneasily and said nothing, but his eyes maintained their strained contemplation of the man before him. The corporal continued, his voice hard and vibrant:—

"You lied before the court; you know you lied. Your testimony was all lies; a monstrous mass of fabrication. Your seeming reluctance at giving such damaging facts against a brother officer was a magnificent piece of acting, or I'm no judge. Why, I almost believed it myself. It was so artistic that I was forced to admire it, in spite of the horrible light in which it placed me. I can remember now the sort of wonder that struck me when I saw what you were driving at; that you were bent on ruining me for good and all; that you were determined to get me out of the way, merely because you thought she was beginning to care for me. And she was; I know she was."

Weston turned to face Anderson, and in doing so knocked against his bullet-torn body. A sternly suppressed cry of agony leaped from the latter's lips, and he dug the ground with his nails.

"Heavens, man, be careful!" he gasped.

"Be careful? Be careful? Well, you are a cool one," and the condensed and restrained bitterness of five years rose up and surged from Weston's lips. "Here you are with a few nice, clean, merciful bullets through you, and you complain as though it were real hard luck—actually have the gall to tell me to be careful—really labour under the delusion that you are in pain. Why, my dear fellow, just wait until you have spent a few months and years sitting up nights with the dear, bleached bones of the past. Then you will be qualified to kick.

"Did *you* ever get up one single morning in your life with everything black

* ARTICLE 100.—"When an officer is dismissed from the service for cowardice or fraud, the sentence shall further direct that the crime, punishment, name, and place of abode of the delinquent shall be published in the newspapers in and about the camp, and in the State from which the offender came, or where he usually resides; and after such publication it shall be scandalous for an officer to associate with him."

before you—absolutely without hope for anything, past or future? You know the feeling. Multiply that by five, then by three hundred and sixty-five, and you will have a fairly accurate idea of my existence for some years. I've dreamed it time after time." He continued, in his tones a note of grim pleasantry:—

"Oh, it will be a great satisfaction to grind my knees into your chest and feel you

"'HEAVENS, MAN, BE CAREFUL!' HE GASPED."

It is rather tough that this pleasant interview must necessarily be so short, seeing how long I have waited. I shall really try, however, to be as entertaining as possible and not bore you; also to collect as much of the debt as the limited time will permit. That, you understand, was my idea in allowing myself to be cut up just now instead of you. I am afraid that shortly you won't appreciate my unselfishness. I was simply saving you for myself; for my own exclusively private use. I shall continue to benevolently assimilate these brown gentry until they are nearly on us, and then I shall devote my time to you.

"You will probably be shocked to hear it, Danny, but I intend to kill you." The corporal's voice was steady and as cold and hard as steel. "Yes, I shall strangle you with my hands in the most approved 'Old Sleuth' style. It's strange, isn't it? Five years ago the thought of choking a kitten would have sickened me; but familiarity accustoms one to anything. Night after night I've had my grip on your throat; but I always awoke too soon. I know just how you will act, though; squirm and twist and fight for one more breath. It will amuse me mightily to see your eyes starting and glazing. All the time I shall look into them and laugh. That cheerful laugh of mine will probably be the last thing you will hear. I'll see to that." The corporal laughed now—a dry, mirthless laugh—and through it ran the timbre of the beast, with little of the human in it. "Not quite the kind of a shuffling off you would desire, is it? So rough and crude. Not refined and artistic, like killing the soul and leaving the body. I could shoot you, but I'll waste no clean lead and steel that way. It would also be great fun to pound your face into the dust with a gun-butt. However, I can do that—afterwards."

"Good heavens, Weston! You don't mean that? You can't kill a helpless man that way, like a rat in a trap. You know me. You know that I don't fear death in itself. Leave me to the natives. At least, give me a fighting chance. Don't murder me like a fiend."

"Like a fiend? Good! Your descriptive

powers are truly remarkable. That's just what I am; at least, it appears so. It seems that I have nothing in common with this virtuous world. I am quite without the pale. I have met old enemies, and they, at least, haven't changed; they are still enemies. I've found that I can stand their presented backs better than the averted faces and sneers of those who call themselves my friends. The humanity in me has been burned to a crisp. It rattles round like a pea in a pod. Oh, no, Danny, I won't murder you. Justifiable homicide, we will call it. I shall simply dispense a little rough justice on my own hook. Sweet Providence works too slowly for me. I might do it now and finish it; but I'm not selfish. I want to give you a little time to enjoy the idea of your approaching demise. I would be charmed to hear any remarks you care to make on the subject. Ah, that was a good shot—four hundred yards—did you see that little wretch turn somersault?"

"Oh, come, Weston," the officer replied, recovering himself somewhat, though scarcely above a whisper, and shaking with the fever of his wounds, "I know that I have done you a terrible wrong. But two wrongs don't make a right. If it were only for myself I would tell you to kill away and be hanged. I have nothing but my pay, though, and I must get out of this, for the sake of those who are dependent on me. They at least believe in me and care for me."

"Well, you are a cool hand. I see that your nerve hasn't deserted you in the last five years. You are a pretty one to appeal to me in the name of those who care for you. I suppose you were truly sorry for that poor old gentleman, my father, when you told the Court of the sweet dissipated life you had invented for me; and how I stole the Q.M. funds at Reno." For the first time the corporal lost control of his voice; it shook with suppressed passion. "I suppose it pained you a great deal as you watched the gnawing disgrace and shame break that proud old soldier's spirit and crush him into his grave. Ah! and he believed it; died, believing that the last Weston was a thief!

"She believed it, too," the corporal continued, a note of triumph growing in his tense tones; "but when we are found here and they learn who Corporal Saunders really is, it will be another story. It will appear that I have made a great fight, and have done my best to bring you in. You, the man whose evidence drove me from the service. A finish like that will go far toward making her forget what—thanks to you—she believes me to have been. She will understand, because she cared. You see what a fine sense of honour I have left. I want to deceive the one person who will have faith in me, even at the end. But still, she will remember me, Danny, dear, when you are rotting in well-earned oblivion."

"Oh, then you are quite determined, are you?" And the wounded man, by agonized effort, raised himself on his elbow. "Well, you are a bigger fool than I thought." He chuckled drunkenly, a ghastly grin on his blood-streaked features. "Yes, I lied to the Court. My, but your innocent face was a study! It was rather artistically done, as you say, and I would do it again. Why not? Do you suppose, my dear Weston, when she meant, to me, all the happiness in this world or the next, that I would allow a few lies and the fear of a mythical hereafter to bluff me? Not much.

"Love you? Why, you idiot"—and he pointed a crimson, derisive finger at the corporal, who had ceased to fire in the intensity of his listening—"why, she never thought twice of you. She told me so. We were married six months after you left."

"Oh—you—liar!" burst from the corporal's white lips.

"Liar, you say? Look here." Painfully the officer dragged a locket from his shirt and threw it at the other. With shaking fingers Weston seized it and tore it open. Inside was a miniature, and the corporal's soul welled up into his eyes. "Oh, ho!" sneered Anderson. "Things appear to have become a trifle twisted. 'The best-laid plans'—you know. You had it all fixed to make things unpleasant for me; but, as you say, your methods are crude at the best. Your pretty little melodrama has rebounded on your own head. Why, you actually appear to have shrunk a foot. Ah!" The final strain was too much, and he sank forward on his face.

In truth, the corporal did shrink. He seemed to have grown smaller, his face drawn and grey. A sudden, uncontrollable quivering racked him from head to foot. His rifle fell neglected at his side, and the whistling lead passed unheeded over him. He held the picture in both hands, and all his strength seemed concentrated in his eyes.

"Oh, little girl, little girl," he shuddered, "haven't I had enough without this? Haven't I had my share? Must justice fail at the last? Must all that I have gone through count as nothing?" He dropped his head on his arms. "Yes, yes; I can't

"HE HELD THE PICTURE IN BOTH HANDS, AND ALL HIS STRENGTH SEEMED CONCENTRATED IN HIS EYES."

hurt him now. I can't do it. I can't do it. Oh, why is it? Where is the fairness? Where is the justice? Where? Where? Where? Is there nothing, then, for me—nothing but darkness without end?" He turned to Anderson. "You were married? She is yours? Does she care—much?" he asked, dully, his eyes dark and wide with pain.

"Yes," gasped the officer. "I'm—not worth it. I know—that; but it's true, Weston—I swear—it's true."

"Come! We must get out of this," and the corporal reached for his rifle, all the dullness gone.

"Fool, fool! Weston, my friend, you were always a fool, always will be. You might have known. It's too late now, my boy, too late. You've botched the finish as you've botched everything else." And so it seemed.

The natives, taking advantage of the cessation of firing, had crept in, and a party of twenty was advancing on a run scarce a hundred and fifty yards distant.

Weston leaped to his feet.

"Quick, Anderson, get on my back."

There was no answer; the officer was unconscious. The soldier seized the rag-like figure, slung it under his arm like a bag of meal, and lurched down the road. He made twenty yards, when a heavy Remington ball smashed through his shoulder; but he did not fall. The blood, and sweat, and dust blinded him, but he staggered on and on, his breath whistling in sobs through his clenched teeth; but it was no use, and, dropping Anderson's limp form, he stood astride it, fixing his bayonet.

As he towered there he was a wonderful and terrible figure, and even the twenty hesitated before they rushed him. He had searched the world for it and now stood face to face with the death he courted; but the instinct of the animal to live bade him fight, and, besides, between his feet was the man *she* loved and whom he must send back to her. His face was calm and a great peace had settled on it.

The first native who came was received on the bayonet and tossed aside like a sheaf of wheat. The skull of the second was crushed like a rotten cocoanut with the butt of the piece; then they closed on him from all sides like hounds on a wild boar.

The stock of the rifle was splintered now, but he whirled the barrel like a flail, and when it struck there was sudden death. Once he went down, blinded with blood, from a bolo cut in the forehead, but he shook them off as a dog shakes off water, and the man who cut him would thereafter cut no more. The anting-anting he wore did not

prevent his head from being smashed to a pulp.

But this could not last. One against two hundred are odds not to be sustained by mortal man.

Weston went down again, and as he struggled to his feet there came faint and far away the stirring trumpet call, "As skirmishers," immediately succeeded by "Commence firing." There was a ripping sound, such as might have followed when the veil of the temple was rent in twain, and several of the hombres on the outskirts of the pack that was closing in jumped into the air and then fell on their heads in the dust. The rest of the ragged force stood still for an instant like frightened deer and then scattered, darting away in all directions.

"THE STOCK OF THE RIFLE WAS SPLINTERED NOW, BUT HE WHIRLED THE BARREL LIKE A FLAIL."

One, as he rushed by the corporal's reeling figure, plunged his bolo, with an upward swing, through the soldier's body, the ugly blade standing out a foot behind the back. Weston lurched forward, clutching the hilt in a vain effort to draw the weapon out; then he fell on his face, turned slowly over, and, like Private Dolan, went to sleep with his head on his arm, as the khaki-clad line whirled by.

An officer and a big, puffing and perspiring surgeon halted and bent over the two figures in the road. "This one is done for," the latter said, pointing to Weston, "and this—Great Scot! It's Anderson," he cried, ripping open the shirt. "Pshaw, nothing but loss of blood," he continued, in a relieved voice. "He will pull through all right."

And he did. He lived to go back to the girl who loved him, and whose picture the quiet figure beside him still clutched in a blood-smeared hand.

Seaside Resorts Past and Present.

By E. N. Sanders.

A HUNDRED and fifty years ago such a sight as may be seen any day during the season at popular resorts like Blackpool, Margate, and Ramsgate was undreamed of. Seaside holidays had not then been invented. The seaside itself had not been discovered. Holidays in those days were spent in the country or at inland watering-places, and the coast was considered unhealthy.

But about 1750 or 1760, mainly owing to Dr. Richard Russell's book on the merits of sea-breezes and sea bathing, a change began to take place. Every year people visited the seashore in gradually increasing numbers, and when the railways did away with much of the tedium of travel the watering-places were among the first to reap the benefit. Places which a few years previously had been little more than fishing hamlets now earned sufficient in the summer months to tide them over till the next season brought another crowd of visitors. All round the coast these holiday resorts sprang into being, and the names of Margate, Ramsgate, Weymouth, Brighton, and many other places became household words. In order that our readers may see how rapidly certain of these towns have grown, the present-day photographs in this article show the various places from as nearly as possible the same point of view as that of the old views.

Wonderful, indeed, has been the growth of some of these towns by the sea. Take Blackpool, for example. Who that knows the Blackpool of to-day would think that about seventy years ago, at the time of our first illustration, its population was only some two thousand? In 1905 this number had increased to fifty-five thousand seven hundred and twelve. What the population rises to in July and August it is impossible to say. To see, in the height of the season, the miles of broad promenades, the spacious sands, and no small portion of the sea literally

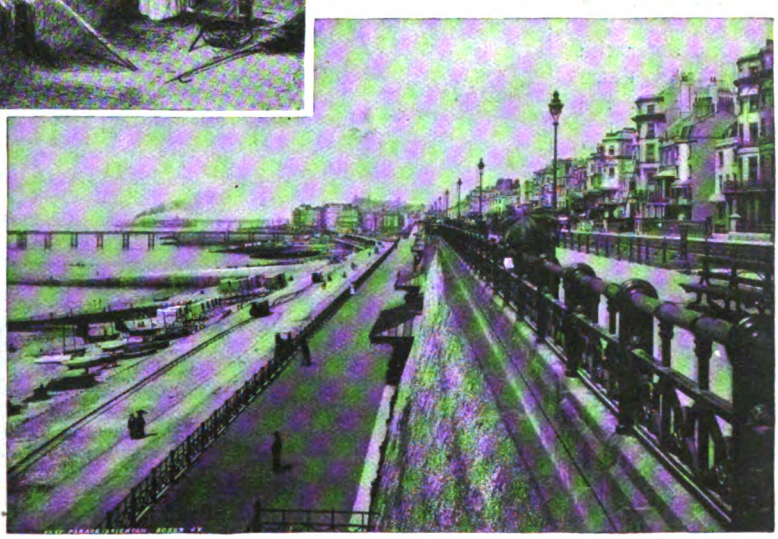
BLACKPOOL ABOUT SEVENTY YEARS AGO.
From the Engraving by W. H. Bartlett.

From a Photo. by] BLACKPOOL TO-DAY. *[the Photochrom Co., Ltd.*

packed with humanity, is to wonder where they all find room to sleep.

When the stranger within our gates complains that English seaside resorts do not know how to amuse their visitors, it is safe to say he has never been to Blackpool. If there is one thing this enterprising Lancashire town takes pride in, it is the extraordinary number and variety of the amusements it provides for its patrons. To be dull in Blackpool is an impossibility. The only thing one might search for in vain is quiet, and he who likes to spend his holidays alone with Nature will go elsewhere.

BRIGHTON ABOUT SEVENTY YEARS AGO.
From the Painting by T. Creswick, R.A.



BRIGHTON AT THE PRESENT TIME.
From a Photo. by Valentine & Sons, Dundee.

So rapidly are most of our seaside resorts growing, especially on the south and south-east coasts, that the day may not be so very distant when all the coast towns from, say, Whitstable to Bognor will have joined hands. It will not come about in our time, perhaps, but a glance at a map will show that the idea is not so far-fetched as may at first sight appear. Consider the cases of Brighton and Hove, Hastings and St. Leonards, and St. Leonards and Bexhill, and ask yourself if the same thing may not in time happen to many of the other towns round this portion of the coast.

Modern Brighton may be said to owe nearly everything to two men—Dr. Richard Russell and George IV. At the time Dr. Russell published his book in praise of sea-bathing, to which we have already referred, he was living at Brighton, and the first to visit the seaside in search of health were his patients.

To George IV., as Prince of Wales, Regent, and King, belongs the credit of making the town the most fashionable watering-place in England—a title to which it still has every right.

In our early view of Brighton may be seen the famous Chain Pier, for many years one of the great attractions of the town. Medals were struck in its honour when it was opened in 1823, and local banks even depicted it on their notes. In 1896 one of the worst storms that have ever visited Brighton completely destroyed it, but as it had been declared unsafe a few months before, its loss was not such a blow to the town as it would have been had it occurred ten years earlier. There was, it is said, but one witness of the final scene—a lady living in one of the houses facing the pier. In the height of the storm, hearing a peculiar noise, she went to the window just in time to see the giant chains collapse. Next morning practically nothing of the structure remained, while the beach for miles was strewn with wreckage.

A favourite Kent resort is Sandgate, the

quiet little town which has for neighbours Folkestone, Shorncliffe, and Hythe. To many its great attraction is the fact that the sea always appears to be in, accounted for by the great dip in the shingle. What has been said of another town with a similar situation is equally true of Sandgate: "Telescopes are not needed to watch the white-crested waves chase each other in-shore. They roll gaily at one's feet, and occasionally, to the dread of the inhabitants, but to the delight of the visitors, enter the homes of those who live on the promenade."

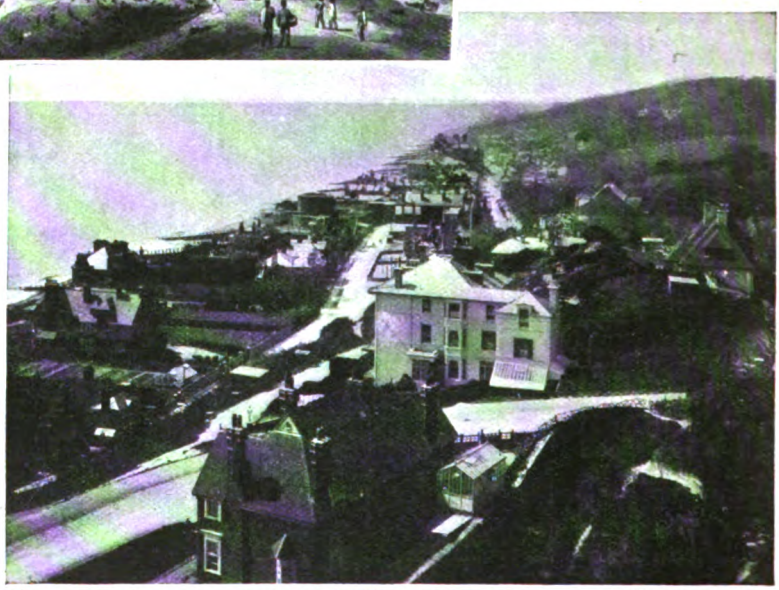
SANDGATE ABOUT ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.
From the Drawing by W. Findlater.

What Blackpool is to the holiday-maker of Lancashire and Yorkshire, Margate is to the Londoner, who looks upon the place as a tonic, which, taken regularly for a week or a fortnight, will banish all ills and set him up for the winter.

"No one can tell what it is in the air of Margate, but practical experience has proved that none better can be found." Such was the opinion of that famous doctor, the late Sir James Paget, and countless thousands of happy holiday-makers and grateful health-seekers have echoed his words.

Our great-grandfathers held more or less the same opinion, though it was at a very different Margate they spent their annual holidays, and a very different journey they had to undergo to reach it. What would the present-day Londoner, with his week-end habit, think if he had to make his choice between spending about eleven hours on the road and the uncertainty of one of the old sailing yachts or packets? The latter *might*, and frequently did, succeed in reaching Margate in eight or nine hours; but with a contrary wind, or in calm weather, the trip often lasted more than a day and a night.

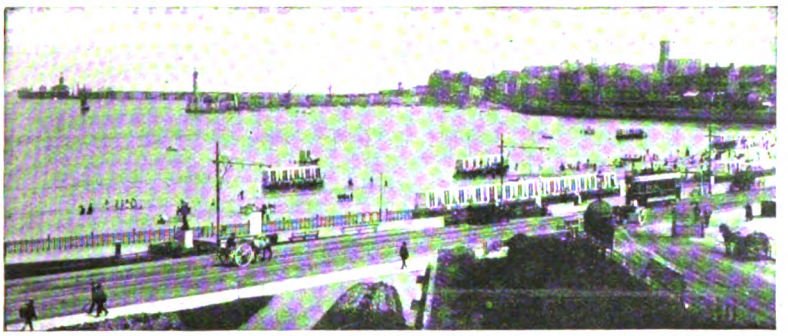
Nowadays the boat service is maintained with the regularity of a railway, and the three companies sometimes run as many as six and seven steamers in one day. The arrival of the "Husbands'" boat on Saturday evening is one of the great events of the week at Margate, the scene on the jetty when the steamer is near enough for faces to be recognised and greetings exchanged being one which no visitor should miss. Many of the steamers making the journey between London and Margate continue round the North Foreland to Ramsgate, the name of which to most people at once calls to mind W. P. Frith's well-known picture of the life on its famous sands. This picture was painted over fifty years ago, but the sands to-day are as popular as ever, and the crowd, if anything, has increased with time.



From a Photo. by SANDGATE AS IT APPEARS TO-DAY. [*W. H. Jacob, Sandgate.*

Ramsgate, like its friendly rival, Margate, is really two distinct places, appealing to two

From the Drawing by] MARGATE IN 1786. *[T. Smith.*

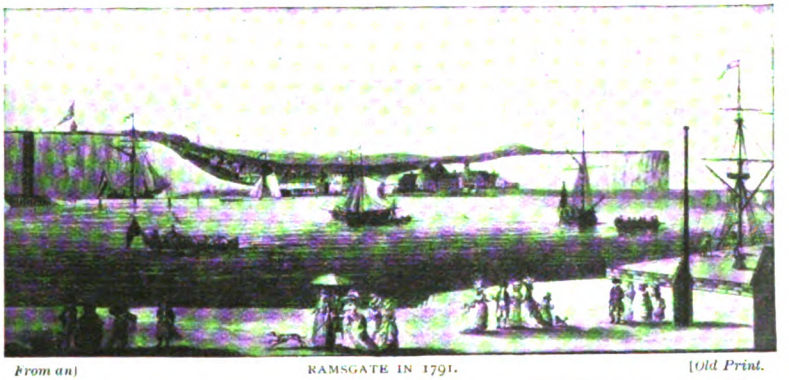


From a Photo. by] MARGATE AT THE PRESENT TIME. *[W. J. Fair, Margate.*

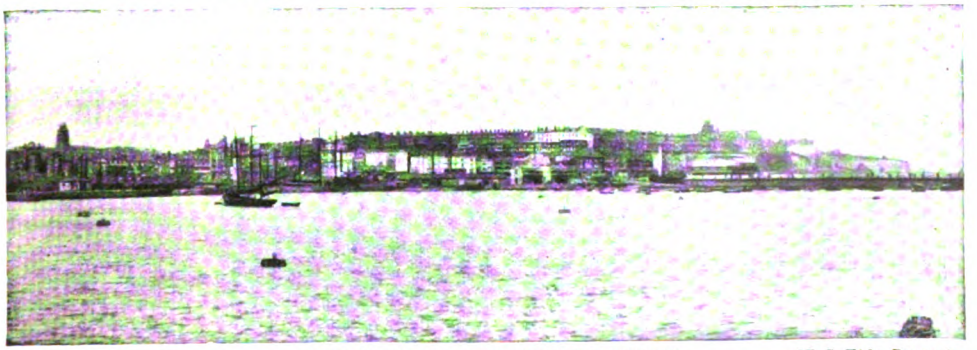
change, which would make it almost unrecognisable to one familiar with the town thirty or forty years ago. The construction of the fine broad road connecting the two cliffs, with the many other improvements carried out at the same time, have made the town one of the most attractive on the Kent coast. A comparison of the old and present-day views will show how the town has expanded both east and west.

quite different classes of visitors. The East and West Cliffs, as is the case with the Cliftonville end of Margate, are almost an unknown land to the visitor whose one idea of Ramsgate is the crowded life of the seashore, with its noise and niggers, its cockles, whelks, and oysters, and its persuasive photographers. In recent years the seafront has undergone a wonderful

Quiet little Broadstairs, situated between its boisterous sisters, Margate and Ramsgate, possesses a character all its own. Though



From an] RAMSGATE IN 1791. *[Old Print.*



From a Photo. by] RAMSGATE TO-DAY, AS SEEN FROM THE HARBOUR. *[E. G. Hicks, Ramsgate.*

From an] BROADSTAIRS NEARLY SIXTY YEARS AGO. *[Old Print.*

From a Photo. by] BROADSTAIRS AT THE PRESENT TIME. *[the Photochrom Co., Ltd.*

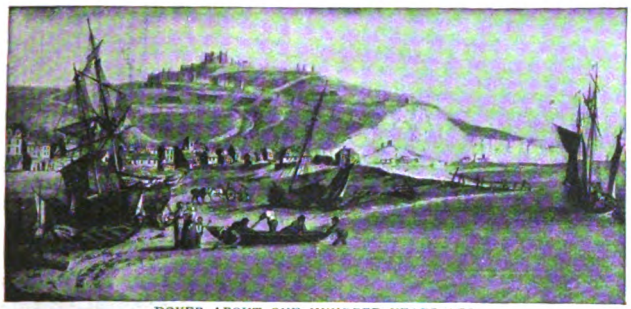
weeks, writing, not, as is generally assumed, the novel bearing that title, but many chapters of "David Copperfield" and other books.

Ask a dozen lovers of Hastings what it is that makes the place so attractive to them, and most of them will probably agree that its charm lies in its delightful blend of seaside and country. It is, perhaps, not too much to say that the inland scenery alone would make the place a popular resort if by some strange chance it were forsaken by the sea. What this double appeal means to Hastings can only be understood by those who have become wearied of the monotony of it has been steadily growing, it still manages to retain its appearance of cosiness, and has a respect for its traditions that is only too rare in these bustling times.

One of the most prominent features in both our views is Bleak House, standing at the edge of the cliff just above the picturesque old pier. In this house, which was enlarged a few years ago, Charles Dickens spent many happy

HASTINGS ABOUT SEVENTY YEARS AGO.
From the Engraving by W. H. Bartlett.

From a Photo. by] HASTINGS TO-DAY. *[Valentine & Sons, Dundee.*



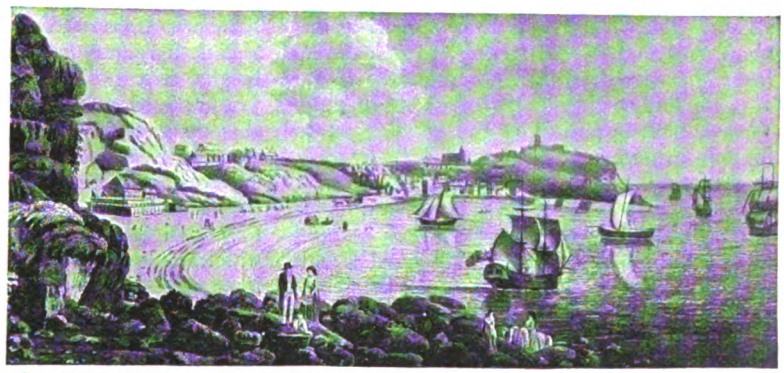
DOVER ABOUT ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.
From the Drawing by J. T. Sares.

From a Photo. by] DOVER AT THE PRESENT TIME. *[Valentine & Sons, Dundee.*

the ordinary seaside town, with its promenade and pier—and little else. The view we reproduce showing the old Cinque Port seventy years ago, before the building of the promenade, makes a striking contrast to the Hastings of to-day, with its fine frontage and crowd of happy holiday-makers.

Dover, another of the Cinque Ports, shows its best face to the traveller when approached by sea. As the steamer nears the white cliffs, the castle, grey and grim, is seen standing clear-cut against the sky, while, far below, the new Admiralty harbour stretches wide its gigantic arms. Thus the spectator obtains in a glance a rapid impression of Dover's position in our national life. What the castle was in the past the harbour will be in the future—one of England's bulwarks against the invader. With such a history to draw upon, next year's Pageant at Dover should be a most striking spectacle.

Scarborough must be accounted one of the veterans among seaside resorts. Our illustration of the town in 1797 shows it as a place of no small size, while for many years previous the reputation of its waters had drawn crowds of visitors. To most people the Spa *is* Scarborough. This is not to say that it is frequented because of the waters, for, truth to tell, very few make even a pretence of taking them. It is more as "a kind of open-to everyone-who-is-respectable club" that visitors patronize it.



From the Drawing by] SCARBOROUGH IN 1797. *[J. Hornsey.*

From a Photo. by] SCARBOROUGH TO-DAY. *[the Photochrom Co., Ltd.*

CELIA'S CONVICT: A Seaside Episode.

By Catherine Adams.

THE incessant crying of the sea-gulls, hurrying inland before the wind, betokened a storm. All the boats were drawn high on the beach, and the few bathing machines boasted of by the little South Devonshire village of Tycombe were being pulled up into the sandy road above the shore, well out of reach of the incoming tide. To the eastward, outside the tiny harbour, could be seen a few belated trawlers beating up hurriedly for shelter.

Celia Manners noted all these signs with a smile. She had been longing for a storm. The last three weeks had been ideal for holiday-making, and she and her camera had been very busy in securing pictures of Tycombe and its lovely neighbourhood. But the sea had been almost too monotonous in its placidity. The girl hungered for a real storm, for splendid effects of great, towering waves dashing against a wild and rocky shore. Now it seemed that her wish was about to be gratified. About two miles away from the village Celia had one day found a particularly rugged bit of coast scenery. With a high sea running the spot ought to furnish something very grand by way of a stormy seascape.

Miss Manners made hasty preparations for a rough walk. Later she was most grateful for her forethought in providing herself with cake, biscuits, and a flask of currant wine.

She toiled bravely up the steep path that led over the cliff, and soon the little stone houses wherein dwelt the fisher-folk of Tycombe were left far behind. Presently she came to the coastguard station, and she wondered why no one was about as usual with whom to exchange the time of day or state of weather. Though, for the most part, her way lay right in the teeth of the gale, she plodded on determinedly. For all her slight figure she was healthily built and not easily daunted. The force of the wind, however, retarded her progress considerably, and it was a long time before she finally reached the first point of the headland for which she was making. She found a path leading down the cliff-side, and she climbed down on to the rocks below. At the farther end of the cove in which she found herself was a rocky promontory, which was affording the waves fine sport. Their immense crests came curling and dashing up against the giant rocks in furious onslaughts, and, as the jagged outlines of the boulders caught them, they divided into vast wreaths of white spray. It was a grand, never-to-be-forgotten sight. Celia caught her breath with delight. "Oh, my poor little camera; how totally inadequate you are to depict all this grandeur!" she exclaimed.

Completely absorbed by her wild environment, she watched the incoming waves awesomely. Then with a start and a smile she recollected her errand. She ventured as near as she dared to the seething, creamy spray, and used her camera to some purpose. She had now only a couple of plates left. She clambered round the first mass of boulders and found the view from thence even more superb. But the wind blew too boisterously. At a little distance ahead a giant rock reared its enormous height, and Celia decided that its lee side would afford sufficient shelter. So intent was she on securing the finest effects for her remaining plates, she did not notice how ominously narrow was the margin of dry rocks by which she rounded this second promontory. In another half-hour the rocks over which she was now walking would be quite impassable!

Time went by quickly as the artistic element in the girl was absorbed by the beauty of the scene before her. This gratification of her artistic sense presently gave way to some pleasant daydreaming in which ambition had some share. And yet the truth of the aphorism that "Time and tide wait for no man" was being borne to her rapidly and dangerously.

Celia had built up a very alluring castle in Spain. She was no longer the humdrum governess at Minerva House—she was an artist of renown; her pictures, mostly seascapes, by the by, were the talk of the town; even the Academy had——

A wave swept rudely and unexpectedly over her feet, almost upsetting her balance.

The daydream vanished, the present was borne in upon her with a distinct shock. The rocks by which she had come round the promontory were entirely covered by the tide. She gave a quick, scared look the other way. No, there was no retreat possible on that side either.

She was imprisoned between two small promontories, over the rocks of which the waves were now lashing furiously.

Her heart sank, but only for a minute. At the worst it would merely mean an enforced stay of a few hours between the two points. She would have to wait until the tide again receded. A long, dismal wait, truly, for the rain, which hitherto had only been falling in half-hearted, fitful gusts, now came on in real earnest; but still there was no cause for alarm. She moved along the narrow strip of shingle lying between the two promontories, seeking for a path by which she might reach the cliff above. There was none, and the cliffs rose sheer from the shore and were quite impracticable.

"THERE WAS NO RETREAT POSSIBLE."

All at once she uttered a little cry. That dark, green line along the cliff side, what did it mean? With a chill dread creeping over her, Celia gazed at it as if fascinated. It was high-water mark. Only *above* that line was safety to be found, and—the line was several inches above the level of her head!

She caught her breath sharply.

She was caught by the tide. She was in deadly peril of drowning. The two facts were being stamped into her brain with fearful insistence.

She sprang away from the towering cliffs, and ran back to the promontory round which she had come. She hastily took off her boots; she was sure the water could not yet be very deep. At the first step she plunged into deep water, and an incoming wave caught her angrily and dashed her against a rock. She scrambled back, spent and breathless.

She returned to the beach and cast appealing looks at the cliff above, in hopes that a friendly ledge might be found whereon she could cling desperately for life during the next few hours. The waves were creeping quickly up the shingle. All too soon they would be dashing against the cliffs, and she—Celia? Oh! she could picture it all so well.

The minutes were speeding by and she could do nothing. She ran along the beach yet again, her eyes sweeping the cliff-side despairingly. She could not discern the tiniest foothold anywhere. Wringing her hands miserably, she turned about once more. Ah, there *was* something!

In a slight depression of the cliff, not noticeable as she had come from the other end of the beach, was a small ledge. Celia, as she beheld it, uttered a cry of joy. She ran quickly to the place, and then, recognising her utter inability to reach it, she sank down on the stones, sobbing bitterly. The cliff was perfectly precipitate at that point, and the ledge was too high for her to clamber up to it. She seemed to have been crying a long time—in reality it was but a few minutes—when above the noise of wind and sea the sound of a voice came to her:—

"If you will leave off crying I can help you."

Celia looked round hastily, but, seeing no one, concluded that her senses had begun to fail her. But a loud shout, and the end of a rope dangling in front of her, at length con-

vinced her that there was someone else in this desolate bit of world besides herself.

She looked up. Peering over the ledge above her, on which he lay prone, a man's pale face was set like a cameo against the dark rock. He was so pale that Celia shrank back a little, but a bare arm holding the rope looked reassuring and eminently fitted for the business in hand.

"You are going to draw me up?" she said, wonderingly; but the words were torn from her lips by the rough wind, and the would-be rescuer never heard. But words are of small account in moments of great stress, and a few shouts of direction and encouragement from the man were sufficient.

Celia, holding the rope tightly with both hands, and with feet planted fly-wise on the upright cliff to lessen her weight, was at length drawn up and on to the shelf of rock, which to her grateful eyes broadened appreciably from the narrow ledge it had appeared to be from below.

She was safe! The truculent waves could be heard below, beating angrily on the very stones she had lately been kneeling on.

The man was still panting with the exertion of pulling her up the rock.

"I am afraid that I was too late to save you a wetting," he remarked, very unconventionally. "Come this way, please. You must go on all fours, for locomotion is not easy up here."

The man put his arm round her to keep her from slipping over the side, and Celia crept along the ledge until, at an angle facing inland—hence its invisibility from the shore—an opening appeared in the rock. "You must creep through first, please. It will be rather dark at first, I fear."

"CELIA WAS AT LENGTH DRAWN UP."

It is hard on a heroine to use a verb like "wriggle," but the fact is Celia wriggled through the low opening and into a cave.

"Now you can stand upright and survey my present domicile," and the man laughed a little cynically.

"You live *here?*" the girl exclaimed, as she looked round the dimly-lit cavern in which she found herself. "Surely you are joking?"

"No; it is a hard truth. I live here at present—that is, as long as His Majesty's Government and the authorities at Princetown will allow me. I am, madam, an escaped convict!"

Simultaneously with this announcement there flashed into the girl's recollection the headlines of a contents bill she had seen outside the little news store at Tycombe so long as a week ago, and which was as follows: "Daring Escape of a Convict. At Large on Dartmoor!"

Celia shivered a little. She was certainly rather wet about the ankles, but the shiver was one of dismay. Alone! with an escaped convict! in a perfectly unsuspected and unapproachable cave, high up in the face of the cliff, and this, moreover, in one of the loneliest spots on the coast thereabouts.

In the gloom of the cave the man anxiously watched the different emotions chasing each other across her expressive face.

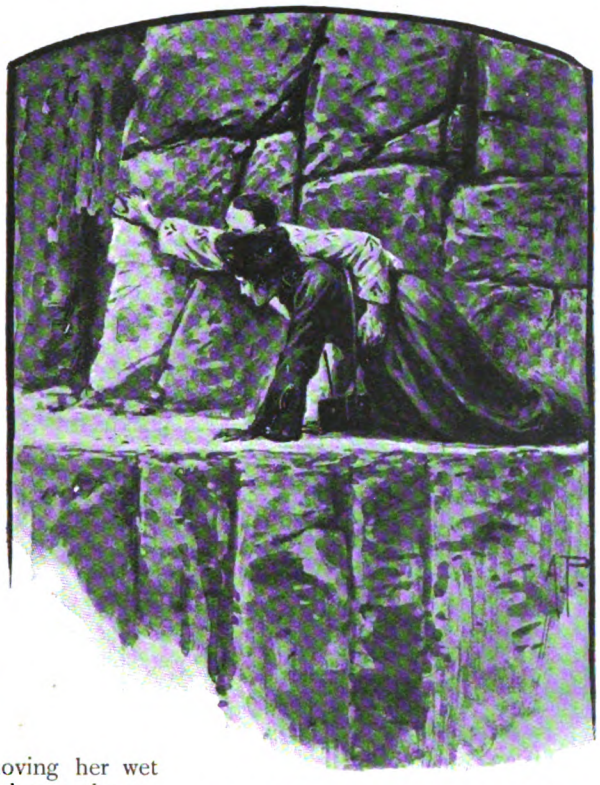
"I would have suppressed the fact, in view of your peace of mind, only you could not have failed to perceive the peculiarity of these adornments."

He pointed to the arrows scattered plentifully over his clothes, and which Celia could see plainly now that her eyes were accustomed to the dim light of the cave.

The girl's finer nature soon recoiled from her first thought and asserted itself. "You

have been very good to me," she said, softly. "You have saved my life. That is all I think of—all that I shall remember, most gratefully, believe me, in connection with to-day's events."

"Thank you," he said, warmly. He liked her even better than if she had protested vigorously in his favour and probable innocence. With graceful tact she had left that matter entirely alone, and so he decided to say nothing further regarding himself just then.



"THE MAN PUT HIS ARM ROUND HER TO KEEP HER FROM SLIPPING."

Celia, after removing her wet mackintosh, was shown the resources of the cave.

"It is partly natural and partly artificial," said the convict. "Evidently, many years ago, it was used as a store by smugglers. Look!" He showed her, in the inner part of the cave, a hollow scooped out in the floor which caught and held the water which at that point came filtering through the roof. "I shall not haul in my flag for want of water, you see."

"But how about food? You will starve if you stay here?"

"I do not deny that the commissariat is rather low, but I have hopes of replenishing it. I wonder——" he broke off abruptly.

"Yes?" she queried.

"I wonder if you are hungry," he added, lightly, but Celia had an idea that that was not what he had intended saying.

"How forgetful I am!" said the girl, suddenly. She drew her parcel from the mackintosh covering of her camera, in which she had bestowed it. "There!" she cried, gaily, "you must let me share this with you. Thanks to you, *I* shall get a good round meal before very long. How long do you think?"

"I fear that you must put up with my company for at least five hours."

The man might be a scoundrel, she opined, though the straight glance of his keen blue eyes and the proud carriage of his head much belied it; but, at any rate, his manners were those of a gentleman.

Celia produced her cakes and wine, and the two outwardly incongruous companions made merry over the little feast. At its conclusion the girl had something to say.

"I shall come here every day at low tide with a contribution to the commissariat."

"You must not! Once you are quit of this you must not mix yourself up with my wretched affairs. I am sure you mean it very kindly, but indeed I cannot allow it." The escaped convict stood up; his head was turned slightly away from her. He was evidently debating some point with himself. Celia looked at him critically. He was tall, with a well-knit frame; his head—a very fine head—was put well on the broad shoulders. His face in profile was finely cut, and she imagined that a more healthy tinge in his pale skin would transform the man entirely. Rid of that cadaverous look, with the hollows of his worn face smoothed out, he would be nearly handsome. The nearly handsome man turned suddenly and caught her look.

"I was wondering," Celia began, lamely, colouring a little.

"Wondering why I am a convict," he said. "I could see the question in your eyes. Well, I will tell you, and I'll make the story as brief as possible, as it is not too pleasant. I am Convict 201. That is the name by which they know me at the prison. The

"CELIA PRODUCED HER CAKES AND WINE."

crime for which I was convicted was a bad one. I do not deny that. Before my conviction I was Rodney Hampden, and I was the junior partner in Hampden and Gray, an old firm of solicitors in Nottingham. Gray had taken the place of senior partner some ten years previously, on the death of my father. Some valuable documents, deeds, and certificates of stock were not forthcoming when unexpectedly applied for by the client by whom they had been entrusted to our firm. A very clever piece of forgery and embezzlement was next exposed. Someone—and that someone it was indisputably proved could only have been one of the partners or the managing clerk—had sold and realized the whole lot. Heaven knows how it came about, but suspicion fell on me. Such a combination of circumstances to prove an innocent man guilty could only have been brought about by the connivance of the Evil One. The charge could not be refuted. It is needless to bore you with the details of my arrest and trial. I had the best of counsel, but it was useless. Such things do happen sometimes, so the chaplain at the prison tells me. He is a good man, and I think he believes in me, only he must not say so. He has tried his best to make me believe that my imprisonment is some peculiar dispensation of Providence for my ultimate spiritual good. I am too material, however, to appreciate his arguments. Oh, to be free, really free; not cooped up here, afraid to stir a hand's breadth lest a coastguard spy me, but *free!* Ah, I forget; you cannot understand."

"I do," she said, quietly, "and I believe you; I believe in your innocence."

"Thank you. May I shake hands with you?"

Celia's pretty, soft palm was clasped by the horny hand of the convict. He turned away quickly when her hand was withdrawn.

"It seems centuries since I touched a hand like yours—a lady's hand." There was a quiver in the deep voice.

"You said that there were two others who might have been guilty. Did you suspect neither?" Celia asked, presently.

He turned and looked at her. His eyes were blazing.

"I don't suspect. I *know!* It was Gray. He was the scoundrel, who, guilty himself, yet wove the net of circumstantial evidence so diabolically round myself that there was no escape."

"Then why did you not denounce him?"

"Gray had married my sister. She was in delicate health. As she is the only relative I have, the only being I love, you will understand."

"Oh!" cried Celia; "why must such things be?"

Presently he told her some of his plans. As soon as ever the search had died away a little, he hoped to get a disguise and make his way to Plymouth, whence he could reach a non-extradition port, if he only had luck.

"The wonder to me is your finding this marvellous hiding-place," said Celia.

"I did not find it," he told her, with a smile. "A fellow-prisoner, to whom I had rendered some slight service, told me of the place. He is an old man, too old to make a bid for freedom. The cave had been shown to him when he was quite a lad by his old grandfather, who no doubt had made use of it in the good old days of smuggling. Daddy, as we call him, is too old to be suspected of such things. They never dreamt that he would secrete sufficient bits of hemp wherewith to make a rope. And without that rope the attempt would have been useless."

When the time came for her to leave the cave, Celia could scarcely believe that her detention had lasted so long. Very carefully did the convict hoist her over the ledge and lower her to the beach.

The summer storm had been short-lived, and with the recession of the tide the waters were calming rapidly.

"Please, *please* go back to the cave," urged Celia, as her host lingered on the ledge for a final farewell.

"I do not think anyone would be likely to be on the prowl after such a storm," he said. "I hope you will reach home before the light fails. I shall watch you until you are well round the point. "Good-bye—may I say it just this once?—*Celia!* Celia," he repeated, with a lingering accent on the name that was almost a caress.

"Not good-bye, but *au revoir*," said the girl; "for, indeed, I *shall* come again to-morrow!"

She turned away with a little parting wave of her hand and went a few steps on her way; then her face set like stone.

With a well-attempted air of unconcern, however, she went bravely forward. But it was too late. A party of men were coming round the promontory. They came quickly towards Celia, eyeing her with looks of astonishment. Two of the number she recognised as belonging to the coastguard, while three were in the uniforms she knew to be in use in Government prisons. One of the coastguard came towards her.

"Excuse me, miss, but how did you get down the cliff?"

"By the footpath, of course," said Celia.

"There's no footpath *this* side of Grim's Corner, as we call the point behind us, and as for the other point, look!"

The waves were still racing over the farther promontory.

"I did not say that I had come that way," said Celia, haughtily. Why did they question her so? Ah, she knew well enough, and her heart sank as she remembered the danger of the man she had just left.

"I'm sorry to be so troublesome, miss, but it is a curious thing that you could not have passed the point for at least five hours. We've been waiting for the tide to allow of us getting round, and there was certainly no one in front of us."

"I object to answer any more questions," said the girl.

"I am very sorry, but there is a reason for my questions. Unless someone let you down the cliff, which is impossible, you could not have got on this bit of beach only before the tide came in some hours ago."

"I don't deny that I have been here some time," said Celia; "but what of that?"

"Only this, miss; no living person would be found in Lisden Cove after such a high tide as we've just had."

Then one of the Princetown officials spoke.

"It's a kind thing for you to do, miss, to try and shield a poor chap like No. 201. But we know he's hereabout. There's no doubt that he has been fool enough—I mean kind enough—to help you out of the way of the tide just now. That is so, eh?" He turned to his mates, who gave assent. "We know there is a cave in this very cove, and we have reason to know that our man is there. Will you please show us the place?"

"No, I will not!" she cried, defiantly, purposely raising her voice. The men looked at her perplexedly. "I shall tell you nothing," she repeated.

There was a shout from the cliff. The men exchanged startled looks, for there, high up on the face of the cliff, Convict 201 stood upright on the ledge.

"You can put down your revolver, Scott," called the convict. "I have no arms, and I am coming down to give myself up." As he spoke he slid down the rope to the group below. "But if you dare to molest or trouble that young lady any more I'll knock you down."

"I am sure I beg the lady's pardon," said Scott, as he quickly handcuffed his prisoner.

"How did you hear of me? How did you know of my hiding-place?" asked the convict, quickly.

"Old No. 85 is bad with sunstroke, and he got blabbing in his delirium."

"Poor old Daddy!" Then the convict lowered his voice. "Scott, I'll go with you quietly, I give my word. But let me have a few moments with the young lady first; there is something I want to say to her."

The warder looked at him keenly, but said nothing.

"Scott," he whispered, brokenly, "you know what I am going back to, and, of course, after this break-out, it will be much worse than before; can't you let me say good-bye to the bit of Heaven I have just had a glimpse of?"

"All right," the man replied, his voice a bit more gruff than before.

Celia was too much distressed to bear

much part in the final leave-taking with the prisoner.

"I hate to think that I am in some measure responsible for your capture," she told him.

"No, no; you are not. It is a whim of Fate. She has made poor old Daddy the instrument in this bit of bad luck, even as he was responsible for my escape. But I do not regret it. I—I have got something to take back with me that I had not before."

"And that?" she asked, innocently.

"A memory—only a memory of yourself, but it is a very sweet memory."

With a pathetic smile he held out his handcuffed hands. Celia clasped them in hers, and then he was taken away by his captors.

"HE HELD OUT HIS HANDCUFFED HANDS."

It was a thoroughly worn-out and dejected Celia who finally reached the shelter of her landlady's roof that night.

To the consternation of that lady, and to her own astonishment, she burst into a violent fit of crying when Mrs. Grist naturally expressed her relief at seeing her safe.

"If it had not been for the kindest, bravest man who helped me, I should have been drowned. And I almost wish I had been," she added, fiercely, with a fresh outburst.

Six months later the head governess at the Misses Smythe's School for Young Ladies was informed somewhat acrimoniously by one of the principals that a gentleman wished to see her.

When Celia entered the drawing-room at Minerva House she almost created a scandal in that high-toned establishment. She nearly shrieked in her surprise.

"You! you!" she cried. "Oh!" as her hand was taken and wrung fervently.

"You did not see it in the papers?" he asked, as he eagerly took in all the details of the sweet face, which was more charming than ever in its sudden confusion.

"We never see the papers," said Celia.

"Then you did not know that my miserable brother-in-law is dead? You did not know that he sent for a magistrate at the last and made a full confession? My innocence has been completely proved. I am free—free at last!" he said, jubilantly.

"Oh, I am glad—glad! I cannot say how very glad I am."

"You are glad?" he said, looking eagerly into her eyes. "Then you do care—I mean you will try—to begin—to——"

But what began, took shape, and was finally consummated from that very floundering speech of his would make quite another story!

Ancient Art and Modern Costume.

In each pair of figures the second is precisely the same as the first, save that it has been endowed with raiment.

HAS it ever occurred to anyone to consider what our *chefs-d'œuvre* of classical sculpture would look like if decked out in conventional twentieth-century garb? Modern costume is, as we know, the despair of contemporary artists. The "twin cylinders" wherein man is wont to enshrine his nether limbs have driven many sculptors to the verge of suicide. But in spite of this, and the *ipse dixit* of Mr. Thomas Brock, R.A., who recently declared that "trousers cannot be made artistic—at any rate in statuary," we are of opinion that the masterpieces of Phidias, Scopas, and the rest be any worse for modern costume?

We know that the earliest Hellenic sculptors draped their figures, and before the Venus of Knidos made her bow to immortality the practice of clothing the human form was general. Why should not this ancient practice be revived? Suppose, for example, Mr. Thornycroft, R.A., should one morning receive a commission from some enterprising millionaire—not necessarily Transatlantic—to execute an improved, up-to-date virgin goddess. Why should he not produce a statue similar in style to the

THE ANTIQUE STATUE OF "VENUS TRIUMPHANT."

THE SAME STATUE DRESSED AS A LADY OF TO-DAY.

the despised garment may lend itself to æsthetic treatment to quite as great a degree as the Roman toga or the flowing draperies of Greece.

But although it is quite feasible, the question may be asked—What audacious artist is to come forward to endow Apollo with trousers and endue Venus with vestments? Even the most devoted worshippers of ancient art have to ask themselves candidly—Would fashionably-attired "Venus Triumphant" shown in our first illustration? Surely no artist would be ashamed of affixing his hall-mark to such exquisitely-moulded lineaments. Paquin and Redfern might sigh in vain for so shapely a model to display the charms of their latest creations. "It is wonderful!" exclaimed a well-known artist, on being shown our photograph of the befrilled and befurbelowed goddess. "The

statue might have been made to fit the dress — not the dress the statue!"

Would anybody assert that the famous Venus has lost a whit in grace or dignity by being thus transformed? We think not. Not that we wish for a moment to decry the beauty of line and charm of contour of the human form. But if the statue must be draped, should it not be draped in a manner which mirrors forth the taste and spirit of the time, so that future generations may see (and, we trust, admire) the picturesque costume of their ancestors?

VENUS OF THE CAPITOL BECOMES THE VENUS OF A LONDON DRAWING-ROOM.

Since Venus, in addition to being a prominent member of the Olympian Club, was—like all the rest of that select community — intensely human in her desires and actions, we cannot help thinking that she must have keenly regretted the convention which debarred her from sharing with her more mortal sisters the subtle fascination and delight appertaining to the fashionable milliner's establishment. But she need pine no longer for the dainty rustle of the silken skirt or the soft whisper of muslin frills and flounces, for in the above design (Venus of the Capitol) we see the beautiful goddess arrayed in garments which Worth himself would not hesitate to acclaim as supreme triumphs of the modern artiste's skill.

Those interested in masculine modes would do well to study the attire of the fashionably-dressed young "man about town" shown in our next illustration. But, after all, the coat depends very much upon the man inside, and not to all of us, alas! is it given to combine the figure of a Mercury with the grace and dignity of a god.

One of the most celebrated statues in the world is the "Apollo di Belvedere." It owes its fame, in a great measure, to the wonderful vitality which seems to glow through the

MERCURY—

—AS A MODERN EXQUISITE.

THE APOLLO DI BELVEDERE— BECOMES —A MODERN OPERA-GOER.

BACCHUS AND AMPELUS.

finely-chiselled limbs. But if the bare but beautiful god were constrained to conceal his comely members in modern attire, what more fitting vesture could be found for him than the "immaculate evening dress" (as the lady novelist hath it) shown in the illustration given above?

Look now at the "Bacchus and Ampelus" here reproduced. We see them converted into khaki-clad warriors. The gallant bugler-boy is assisting his wounded comrade out of the fight. That this *motif* was not the original intention of the

THE SAME IN KHAKI.

sculptor goes without saying, but it makes a very effective group. This statue, it may be noted, is one of the art treasures of Florence, and the Florentines might possibly object to having their highly-prized Bacchus arrayed in British garb. But, after all, the statue is intended for the benefit of English beholders, and we are not the first to adapt Italian art to our own purpose. Do we not translate their novels and interpret their plays?

THE VENUS DE MEDICI—

—DRESSED BY WORTH.

Apollos and Venuses abound in antique sculpture. To the ancient Greeks and Romans they represented the extreme perfection of proportion and contour of which the human form is capable. Is the "Venus de Medici," shown above, which is, however, of more recent date, any more charming in the original than in the modernized version, in which we see Venus as a young and beautiful woman, clad in robes of clinging gossamer, while with one hand she lifts her dainty skirts from the dusty roadway?

Adonis is another popular figure in mythological lore. Here he has abandoned the bow for the hockey-stick, and we see him arrayed in the picturesque kit dedicated to devotees of this exciting pastime. We do not think the young god of the chase looks any the less intrepid for the change, and Venus will probably continue to shower her unwelcome attentions upon him with renewed ardour.

Why should not Mr. Goscombe John or Mr. Frampton give us a statue like the "Meleager" depicted in the

ADONIS—

—AS A HOCKEY-PLAYER.

MELEAGER, THE ANCIENT HUNTSMAN—

AS

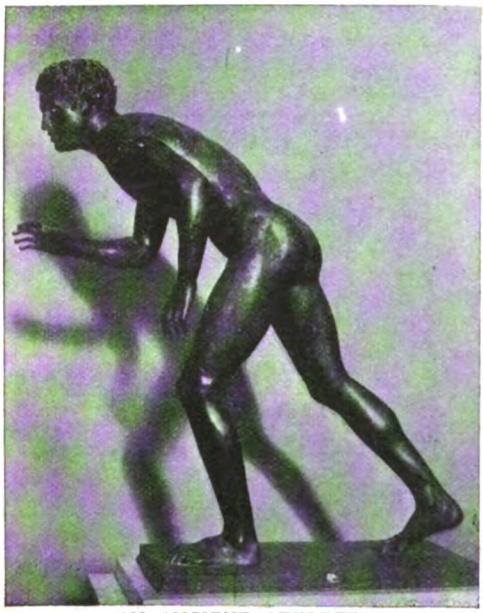
—A MODERN SPORTSMAN.

THE POSTURE OF THE DISCOBOLUS—

above illustration? Here he is shown to us decked out in the scarlet jacket and white breeches of the modern huntsman, while by his side the faithful hound regards with pained amazement his master's sartorial vagaries.

Frequenters of the British Museum are no doubt familiar with the fine statue of a Discobolus which adorns our national repository. But *autres temps, autres mœurs*, and our marble friend, having abandoned his game of quoits—possibly finding it become tedious with the lapse of centuries—has betaken to himself the attire and equipment of

—MIGHT WELL BE THAT OF A PRESENT-DAY ARTIST.



AN ANCIENT ATHLETE—

AS —A MODERN FOOTBALLER.

the artist. The instrument of his sport has turned to the unaccustomed palette, his right hand grasps the brush, and he looks for all the world as if he had just stepped back from the easel to take an admiringly critical survey of his workmanship.

The subject shown in the above illustration is worthy of the greatest sculptors. The

AN ANCIENT PUGILIST—

AS —A PUNTER AVOIDING A COLLISION.

active pose of the trained athlete, the sinewy thews and agile muscles, are enhanced rather than concealed by the addition of the slender stock of clothing which goes to make up the footballer's attire. The classic game was possibly not wholly unknown when this masterpiece of plastic art was evolved, but it is highly improbable that the artist harboured any intention of representing one of these modern gladiators when with firm hand and steady eye he plied his deft chisel.

Punting is an art—and a very fascinating one—but it requires a good deal of skill to acquit oneself therein with grace and distinction. The great Canova's "Damossena Pugillatore" has abandoned the arena for the river, but we doubt if he finds the change altogether to his taste. Not, however, that the more peaceful pastime lacks its exciting moments, and we gather from the valiant pugilist's wrathful expression that he is brooding darkly and bitterly over some recent mishap, when possibly his frail craft and he reluctantly but unavoidably parted company for a space in mid-stream.

We trust that we have shown in the foregoing article that drabness and drapery do not necessarily go hand in hand, and that many of our modern sculptors might do worse than emulate the spirit of the designs herewith reproduced. Would it be too much to hope to see in the next Royal Academy a Psyche adorned after the manner of Bond Street and a Cupid resplendent in the latest sartorial triumphs of Savile Row?

Suppose a Royal personage or statesman of our own time were to appear on some occasion of consequence, he would doubtless robe himself in the conventional top-hat and frock-coat. It was otherwise with Lucius Verus and his contemporaries. The simple toga and sandals sufficed. But their posthumous memorials were even more simply clad, as may be seen in the well-known statue of the Roman Emperor. Our sculptor has, however, taken the liberty of giving him those garments which twentieth-century custom accepts as the correct mode, and even adding that top-hat beloved of the late Mr. Kruger and anathematized by Mr. Cunninghame Graham. It is hard to see that the statue loses anything by the process.

LUCIUS VERUS—

AS —A ROYAL PERSONAGE CARRYING A TROPHY.

THE KING'S JUSTICE.

By Ellis Pearson.

I.

ON a certain evening in July, in the year 1465, a man sat alone in an upper room of a house in the Rue St. Eloi, in the King's city of Paris. The warm air entered in at the unglazed window, and occasionally the rattle of arms and tramp of men down in the street below came to the man where he sat bent over the table. The times were those when Louis XI., whom posterity reckons as the basest and most despicable of French kings, ruled France—if, indeed, ruling it could be called. For, what with the Duke of Burgundy and his allies battering without at the walls of Paris, and the hatred and dissatisfaction towards him of the citizens within, it is to be doubted if he was more than King in name only.

The room was well lighted; in part by half-a-dozen tapers flickering in sconces on the walls, in part by a lamp hanging from the raftered ceiling directly over the table, the light from which, falling on the man, showed him to be of middle age, dark and handsome and determined of face, and dressed as befitted a man of position. He was examining with an air of appreciation the exterior of a small silver box that lay on the table before him — a comfit-box, such as men carried in those days, as snuff-boxes were carried in a later generation.

"A pretty thing," he was murmuring, with a curious smile, "a very pretty thing," and turned it over and over. Presently, however, at a sound from below, the opening and shutting of the door leading into the street, he sat up and, covering the box with his hands, bent his head in a listening attitude.

"M. de Tocqueville is alone?" came a voice, and the answer:—

"Yes, my lord," and, with a smile, he picked up the box and put it in the breast of his doublet.

"At last!" he muttered.

"I'll go up, then," came the first voice again, and the next instant footsteps came rapidly up the stairs. A moment more and the door was opened and a man entered—a young man, tall and thin, fair-haired, and dressed in the extreme of the fashion of that period.

The man at the table rose. "You are very welcome, M. le Vicomte," he said.

The new-comer bowed, and taking off his hat and cloak flung them on to a chair.

"Give you good even, M. de Tocqueville," he returned, and seated himself at the table. "I have two hours only before me," he went on, "so, if you please, we will resume our game at once."

The other laughed lightly. "You are very eager, my friend," he said; "but as you will."

He crossed the room to a cabinet, took out a pack of cards, and, returning, seated himself.

"The stakes as yesterday, I suppose?" he said, as they cut for deal.

The Vicomte nodded. The deal fell to him, and taking up the cards he shuffled and dealt them.

"The King is well?" Tocqueville inquired as he glanced over his hand.

"HE WAS EXAMINING WITH AN AIR OF APPRECIATION THE EXTERIOR OF A SMALL SILVER BOX THAT LAY ON THE TABLE BEFORE HIM."

"Well enough in body," the other answered, with a light laugh; "but in spirit!" He shrugged his shoulders. "My faith, I think he is the very devil!"

Tocqueville looked at him curiously. "I sometimes think, my friend," he said, "that you do not love our good Louis."

"I neither love nor hate him," the Vicomte answered, carelessly. "He is good enough to call me his friend, and with that I must needs be satisfied. Yet, my faith, 'tis no great honour to be treated on a level with a hangman and a barber."

The elder man lifted his eyebrows as if in surprise. "Why, does he so treat you?"

The Vicomte stared. "Nom de Dieu!" he exclaimed. "You mean to say you do not know that Oliver Daim, his barber, and Tristan l'Hermite, his hangman, are his chosen favourites? Why, man, all Paris knows that."

"And he treats you on a level with them—you, the Vicomte de St. Clar—and you suffer it! My friend, you surprise me."

St. Clar frowned, and glanced quickly at his companion. "It is so," he answered, testily; "but, if you please, we will get on."

The other hid a smile behind his cards, then nodded, and the game began.

For half an hour the luck was equal, neither winning, or winning only to lose again, and at last St. Clar flung down his cards with an impatient gesture. "This is monotonous," he said. "Come, let us double the stakes."

"As you please," the other answered, and they commenced again.

The first half-dozen games the younger player won, and a flush came to his cheeks. From the seventh onward, however, luck deserted him, and he lost game after game in quick succession. He lost his coolness and played wildly, at variance with the elder man's quiet and passive manner. Tocqueville played with precision, calmly throwing his cards and taking his tricks, and marking down from time to time his winnings. Yet each time he did so a close watcher might have noted a smile of satisfaction in his eyes, gone almost before it was born. At length he spoke. "Things are going hardly with you, my friend," he said.

St. Clar laughed harshly. "Hardly, monsieur, is scarcely the word. Yesterday I lost St. Clar, to-day——" He caught the other's eyes fixed on him curiously, and he stopped and turned pale.

"To-day you have lost——" Tocqueville took him up.

"Fifteen hundred crowns," he muttered, with an oath.

Tocqueville glanced at the slate beside him. "That is so," he agreed; then he bent across the table. "Do you not think it is sufficient?" he said, with a peculiar smile.

St. Clar started to his feet. "What do you mean?" he cried.

The other waved him back to his seat. "Keep calm, my friend, and be seated." He paused a moment then. "I mean this, M. le Vicomte. The château and lands of St. Clar are mine, and you owe me fifteen hundred crowns." He smiled across at him. "Fifteen hundred crowns is a goodly sum, my friend."

The Vicomte avoided his eyes. "Well?" he muttered.

Tocqueville laughed lightly. "I doubt if it is well," he said, "because—and you should know it as well as I, or better—you cannot pay me."

St. Clar neither moved nor spoke; his eyes were fixed on the cards before him, and his fingers beat a nervous tattoo on the table. He knew it was so, and he had nothing to say. At last:—

"Is it not so, my friend?" Tocqueville asked, softly.

St. Clar answered his question with another. "If you knew this, why did you play with me?"

The other drew a deep breath and hesitated for a moment, then: "Because, my friend," he said, in a low but distinct voice, "I wanted you."

The young man's chin dropped and he half rose. "Nom de Dieu!" he exclaimed. "What do you mean?"

Tocqueville sat in silent thought for some seconds. "I mean this," he answered at last—"I mean—but first——" He rose and stepped to the door. "Excuse me a moment," and, opening it, he called aloud, "André!" An answering shout came from below, and the next instant footsteps came quickly up the stairs, and St. Clar, seated at the table, heard a muttered conversation pass between the two men, but of what nature he could not tell. "At once," he heard Tocqueville say as he was returning into the room, and the man's answer, "Yes, my lord," and heard him return quickly downstairs.

Tocqueville reseated himself at the table. "Now, my friend," he said, with a smile, "we can talk. But first I should like your word that this will go no farther."

"You have it," St. Clar answered, sullenly.

"That is well," Tocqueville said. "And

now, M. le Vicomte, you shall know why I want you." He paused a moment—then, slowly and thoughtfully: "You, my friend, are for Louis of France; I—and of this you have had not the slightest suspicion—am for Philip of Burgundy. In that lies the gist of the matter. Louis and Philip, as you know, are the deadliest of enemies, or my master would not now be besieging Paris, and it is his will that Louis shall die. It is for that I am here, and—prepare yourself, my friend—it is for that I want you."

He finished, and the young man sprang to his feet, his face ashen white. "Mort de Dieu!" he cried. "You want me to kill the King?"

Tocqueville motioned him back to his seat. "Softly, softly," he said. "I do not want you to kill him with your own hands; there is a safer and better way."

"A better way!" curiously.

"Yes, my friend, a better way, or, at any rate, better for you." He put his hand to his breast and drew out the comfit-box, and put it on the table before St. Clar. "You know this?" he questioned, with a smile.

St. Clar's eyes fastened on it as though fascinated. "Mon Dieu!" he muttered. "The King's comfit-box."

Tocqueville laughed. "No, my friend, not the King's," he said; "but one so like it that not even Louis himself would know it to be another."

"Mon Dieu!" the other muttered again, and would have opened it, had not Tocqueville knocked it sharply out of his hand. "No, no," he cried; "on your life do not open it."

St. Clar stared at him with wide-open eyes. Tocqueville's face was white and his breath came fast. "My faith!" he said, in a shaking voice. "You startled me." He bent across the table. "Had you opened it," he went on, in a low voice, "in ten minutes you would be a dead man. Look you," and, picking up the box, he opened it carefully, and as he did so a small blade, half as long and twice as wide as a pin, darted out and receded instantly. He looked into St. Clar's face. "You saw that blade? Well, a touch of that, my friend, means certain death."

"Mon Dieu!" St. Clar said again, and, rising from his chair, he strode to the fireplace and stood leaning against the mantel.

"PICKING UP THE BOX, HE OPENED IT CAREFULLY."

The other followed him with his eyes. "You understand?" he said.

St. Clar's eyes glittered with fury. "I understand well enough," he cried, and half drew his sword, "and, by heavens, I have a mind to kill you for it."

The elder man laughed. "Pooh, pooh; that is nonsense," he said; "it would not avail you; if you as much as lifted your hand to me your life would not be worth that," and he snapped his fingers. "If you want proof of it——" he turned to the door. "André!" he called.

"Yes, my lord," came the answer, and the door opened and three men with bared swords in their hands stood on the threshold.

Tocqueville turned to St. Clar. "You see, my friend, I take no risks," he said, with a grim smile, then motioned the others away.

He seated himself once more at the table. "Now, M. le Vicomte, what say you?"

"I will not do it," St. Clar answered, with an oath.

The other deprecated with his hand. "No, no; do not say that, my friend. You have not yet heard the terms."

"Nor do I wish to."

"It will do no harm, and may do some good. So, please, be seated."

The Vicomte stared at him for some seconds, then broke into a loud laugh. "It is a pretty trap, monsieur," he said, "and you have me fast." He seated himself. "Go on; let me hear the terms," he muttered.

Tocqueville smiled. "That is better," he said; "the terms are good ones and the risk is practically naught." He paused, and toyed with the cards for a time, then: "To begin at the beginning; I hold you, my friend, in the hollow of my hands. St. Clar is mine and you owe me fifteen hundred crowns; you cannot pay me, and you have other debts—and not small ones. You see, I know you. A word from me, and—pouf!—you are a ruined and dishonoured man, an outcast from your kind. I can either make or mar you, and, by my faith"—fiercely—"one I will do! Yet I would rather make you." He looked into the other's face. "Yes, my friend," he went on, "I would rather make you——"

"Because, in making me, you would make yourself," St. Clar broke in.

The elder man laughed. "Well put! It is so; but not wholly for that," he said. "And now for the terms. You, being a favourite of the King, have access to his apartments in the Tournelles. It will be a simple matter, some time when the other box is lying about, to remove it and replace it with this," and he pushed the box across the table. "There is little or no risk, and for so little a risk the reward is great. The lands and château of St. Clar shall be your own again, the debt of fifteen hundred crowns shall be cancelled, and you shall be richer by ten thousand crowns." He gave a little laugh. "My faith, my friend," he continued, "if I were in your shoes I should jump at the chance."

St. Clar nodded. "The terms are good ones," he agreed. "And who will reign in Louis' place?"

Tocqueville rose. "Philip of Burgundy," he answered, and his voice thrilled. "And think you not he will make a better King than yon weakling, a King who has no honour, a King who dresses himself like a merchant, a King who consorts with low-born men like Oliver Daim and Tristan l'Hermite, and ranks them on a level with gentlemen of birth like yourself—aye, and puts them above you? My faith, he would make a better lackey than a King."

The Vicomte stared thoughtfully at his companion. "True enough," he said, after a time; then he too rose. "Par Dieu!" he went on, with a laugh, "you tempt me greatly."

He stepped to the window and put out his head. The temptation was great, and a stronger man than he might have fallen, and he was not of the strongest. On the one side were ruin and dishonour, and what might mean a life of beggary and shame—the thought revolted him; on the other, riches, a life of ease, and, when Burgundy ruled, a good standing at Court, for Burgundy was a man, he knew, who did not forget a service done him; in truth the temptation was great, and—the risk was small. He stood for some minutes turning it over in his mind, then suddenly wheeled round and laughed harshly. "I'll do it," he cried, recklessly, "I'll do it. Give me the box," and he held out his hand.

Tocqueville flushed crimson, and a triumphant light came into his eyes, gone in an instant. He passed the box over. "You are wise," he said, in an even voice; "believe me, you are wise."

"Wise, or not wise," the other said, "I will do it, and I shall claim my reward."

"That, when Louis is dead, you will find awaiting you," Tocqueville answered. "And remember this, my friend: only one other beside ourselves shall know of it—my master—and that for your sake. Beyond him my lips will be sealed."

St. Clar nodded. "That is enough," he said. He picked up his hat and cloak and moved to the door. "And do you remember this, monsieur," he continued, with a sinister look in his eyes—"if I am discovered, I shall not suffer alone."

Tocqueville let the threat pass; he could afford to do so. "With care, my friend," he said, "you will not be discovered. And now, good night."

"Good night," St. Clar returned, and passed down the stairs, out of the house, into the dark and now almost deserted street.

II.

ST. CLAR'S thoughts when, the next morning, he was making his way to the palace of the Tournelles were not of the pleasantest—of which there is small reason, or none, for wonder. It is no small thing to plan the

"'I'LL DO IT,' HE CRIED, RECKLESSLY, 'I'LL DO IT. GIVE ME THE BOX."

death of any man, and how much greater a thing when the man is a King. He knew if he were discovered Louis would show him no mercy—he would deserve none; he knew his vindictive spirit, knew his meanness and sordidness of mind; but he knew also, as last night Tocqueville had said, there was small chance, with care, of his being discovered. He could scarcely restrain a smile when he thought of the past month and saw how he had been brought to this pass; with what ingenuity the thing had been planned; how well thought out. No other man than he would have done for the part he was to play in the tragedy. He saw now why Tocqueville had affected his company, had sought him out so often, had been so friendly, solely for this end. And though he now hated the man, he could not but admire him. Such men went far.

By this he was passing through the gardens of the palace, and a few minutes later found him in the presence of the King and a few of Louis' associates—the Constable of France, Jacques Coctier, his physician, Oliver Daim, and Tristan l'Hermite. They were discussing with grave faces the state of affairs within and without the city walls. Louis' thin, meagre face was pale, and he was speaking rapidly, but he checked himself when his eyes lighted on St. Clar, and he beckoned him to approach.

"Where were you last night, Vicomte?" he questioned, sharply.

St. Clar started, and for the moment knew not what to answer. The thought flashed into his mind that Louis knew of the conspiracy, but he discarded it in an instant. How could he? So he answered truthfully, "I was visiting my friend M. de Tocqueville."

Louis' small eyes twinkled maliciously.

"Visiting!" he snapped. "Visiting, when you know how we stand—Burgundy at the gates and the rabble getting more and more beyond control. Your place was here, sir, with me. But, par Dieu! it is so with all of you; you come to me only when you want something, and for all you care I may be taken and strung up at the nearest gallows."

Tristan l'Hermite, the hangman, stepped forward. "You cannot say that of me, sire," he said; and "Nor of me," "Nor of me," the others put in; only, with a smile of disdain, the Constable held back.

Louis' thin lips curled in a sneer. "I say it of all of you," he said, then waved his hand; "but enough; the matter we were discussing must be thrashed out."

He turned to the Vicomte. "We were discussing," he said, "the advisability of a sortie to-morrow night. The Constable advises it, I don't like it; Tristan and Oliver, needless to say"—with a grin—"agree with me. What, my friend, is your opinion?"

St. Clar was about to reply when the King silenced him with a gesture. "First," he said, "fetch me a plan of Paris and its surroundings; you'll find one in my sleeping chamber," and he turned to the others.

The Vicomte made his way out of the room and up the broad staircase to the

King's bedchamber. He was some time finding the plan—it had fallen from a chair and was half-concealed by the bed-hangings. He picked it up and was returning when it came to him suddenly that now was his opportunity of changing the boxes. He hesitated a moment, listening keenly. He could hear nothing, and he retraced his steps and quickly scanned tables and cabinets. The box was not there. Possibly the King had it on his person, or, again, it might be in his dressing-room. He stood for a moment in doubt, then passed into the latter. He searched each piece of furniture, and at last, on a table by the window, he espied it, and gave an exclamation of satisfaction. He drew out Tocqueville's box and put it alongside the other. Tocqueville had spoken truly when he said that not even Louis himself would know it to be another; they were as alike as two peas.

"My faith," he muttered, "how like"; then, at a sound behind him, he swung round, and turned cold with fear.

And with reason. Louis stood there, grinning, his head held on one side like a bird's. "So this, Vicomte," he said, softly, "is why you were so long; this"—and he pointed to the two boxes. "What does it mean?"

"LOUIS STOOD THERE GRINNING, HIS HEAD HELD ON ONE SIDE LIKE A BIRD'S."

St. Clar answered nothing; he could not find words. His brain seemed frozen, and a chill feeling ran down his spine. Louis broke into a cackle of a laugh, then caught him ferociously by the shoulder. "Par Dieu!" he cried. "What does it mean?"

There was nothing for St. Clar but to tell the truth, and the truth he told, trembling visibly. Louis heard him out, laughing harshly occasionally, breaking into an oath now and then, and when he had finished he clapped him heartily across the shoulders. "It is well for me, Vicomte," he said, "that I thought you a long time, well indeed," and he swore a fearful oath.

He paced up and down the room for some minutes, muttering and laughing to himself, then at last he stopped and eyed St. Clar from top to toe. "My faith, Vicomte," he said, with a wicked laugh, "you will make a pretty adornment for a gallows."

Cold sweat stood in beads on St. Clar's brow, and he held out his hands.

"Mercy, sire," he murmured.

"Mercy!" Louis shrieked; "mercy! You dare to ask for mercy when you would have murdered me, God's anointed! I will be as merciful to you as you would have been to me. And as for your friend Tocqueville——" His eyes fell on the comfit-boxes and he paused. He stared at them for ten seconds, then broke into a fresh paroxysm of laughter. "And to him also, and to him also," he cackled.

St. Clar looked at him half in fear, half in wonder. Louis laughed afresh when his eyes fell on his bewildered face. "Which is your box, Vicomte?" he questioned.

The young man pointed it out, and Louis picked it up gingerly and held it out to him. "Take it," he said, still laughing, "and listen to me carefully," and, bending forward, he spoke for five minutes in a low, earnest voice.

The Vicomte's face at first expressed fear, then wonder, then at last he too laughed loudly. "Good—good," he cried, slapping his thigh; "when, sire?"

Louis nodded. "It is a good plan," he said, complacently; "it is mine. Let me see; to-day is Wednesday; say to-morrow at two, that will suit me best. Be here at one. And

see you, my friend, there is no attempting escape; your first offer to do that will land you on the gallows."

St. Clar's face paled again. "I shall not attempt it, sire," he muttered, and bowed his head.

The King laughed grimly. "Better not, I say," he said. "And now you can go; and remember, a white face, shaking limbs, and a nervous manner, he-he! I would not miss it for my kingdom," and, laughing gleefully, he pushed St. Clar before him out of the chamber.

St. Clar made his way out of the palace without once looking back. Had he done so when he reached the foot of the stairs he might have seen Louis looking down at him with burning, malevolent eyes; and had he been nearer he might have heard him mutter, "So much for your friend, Vicomte; but for you, for you—ah, but we shall see." As it was, he walked straight ahead, cursing to himself. "Curses on it!" he muttered, as he was passing through the grounds; "why did I not think of it myself?"

Meanwhile M. de Tocqueville was congratulating himself on having so successfully carried out one part of his plot. Already he saw his master, Philip of Burgundy, King of France, and himself not the least of his Court. He had no thought that the plot would fail; he knew that St. Clar, for his own sake, would exercise the utmost care, and he was looking forward to the time when the Vicomte would come to him and tell him that his part was done, that the boxes were exchanged.

On this Thursday, then, at two o'clock, he sat alone in the room in which the thing had been planned, looking into the future, and so engrossed was he in his thoughts that he did not hear the door below open, nor did he hear the footsteps of more than one come stealthily up the stairs. Not until the door was opened and St. Clar entered the room did he start to his feet, and then, seeing who it was, he gave an exclamation of joy, and his dark face flushed crimson.

He noted that St. Clar's face was white, that he was trembling, that he looked like one who was filled with deadly fear, and hardly able to contain himself he sprang to his feet and made a quick step forward. "Is it done?" he cried.

St. Clar did not answer. Instead his eyes turned to the door and he appeared to listen. Tocqueville muttered an oath. "There is no one there," he said, testily. "I am private in my own house. Speak! Did anyone see you exchange them?"

St. Clar shook his head emphatically. "Should I be here if they had?" he answered.

"Then why so afraid?" the other sneered.

The Vicomte shuddered. "Had you been through what I have, monsieur, you would be afraid," he said.

"Afraid! Pah! Who is to know? And will not your reward make up for the risk, little enough, you have taken? But"—anxiously—"you have the other box?"

The Vicomte shot a quick glance at his face, then put his hand to his breast and drew out the box. Tocqueville's eyes glistened, and a smile wreathed his face as he turned it over and over.

"Par Dieu!" he murmured, "how like!"

He seated himself at the table and put it down before him. He seemed to forget St. Clar, and leaning his head on his hand he gazed through the unglazed window. He saw himself already great and powerful, the King's right-hand man. He dreamed brave dreams in those few minutes, and only came to earth when he turned and his eyes met those of St. Clar. He rose and clapped him across the shoulders.

"You have done well, my friend," he said, condescendingly, "and you shall have your reward." His eyes fell once more on the comfit-box and he picked it up. "My faith," he murmured, "as like as two peas, yet"—with a grim smile—"how unlike."

He opened it, and then, with wide-open, horror-stricken eyes, dropped it, and looked at his thumb. A thin red streak showed on the white flesh, widening as the blood crept out. "God's death!" he cried, and looked at it as though fascinated.

St. Clar sprang to the door and flung it open. "Enter, sire!" he cried, and his voice rang with triumph; and there entered King Louis, Tristan l'Hermite, Oliver Daim, and half-a-dozen guards.

Louis bowed mockingly. "Give you good day, M. de Tocqueville," he cackled.

Tocqueville's eyes turned on him and they glared with hatred. "Curse you!" he cried, "curse you!" Then he turned furiously on St. Clar. "You hound," he grated, "you dog, and I trusted you."

"No, no, my friend," mocked Louis, "you must not blame him; he was doing his part when I caught him at it; you must not blame him, it is my doing, monsieur, mine," and he laughed gleefully. "But think you," he went on, "had you better not say your prayers? Five minutes of the ten are gone."

Tocqueville glanced round the ring of

curious faces, then with a lightning movement drew a dagger and, lifting it, made a spring forward. It would have pierced Louis to the heart had not a guard intervened his weapon so that it glanced off harmlessly. The effort carried him beyond himself, and he fell to the ground, twisting and squirming. He strove to rise, but his limbs stiffened and and them. "Not so," he cried. "If I am to die, I die fighting," and whipped out his sword.

The guards parted, three taking him on either side, and in a few seconds it was over. He defended himself valiantly, but he had not made a dozen passes before his sword was knocked from his hand. He muttered

"HE FELL TO THE GROUND, TWISTING AND SQUIRMING."

he fell back. He called out one more curse, his face contorted with agony, his eyes gleamed for a moment balefully, a spasm shook him, then he lay back, white and still.

Louis' face was pallid with horror, and he trembled violently. "The saints preserve us!" he muttered, wiping his forehead. "And such a death might have been mine!" He turned ferociously on St. Clar. "And you," he shrieked—"you would have had me suffer thus! Par Dieu! you shall taste of it yourself. Ho, guards, seize him!"

The guards sprang to do his bidding, but St. Clar was too quick for them. In a couple of strides he put the table between himself a curse, gazed for a second at the King, then flung himself on the bared blade of one of the guards. It pierced him through, and he, too, in a minute lay dead.

The others cried aloud in fear, and looked at each other with horror in their eyes. Louis crossed himself. "The saints preserve us!" he muttered again. "Holy Mother defend us!" and he moved towards the door.

At the threshold he turned, and for a moment eyed the two still figures. "So perish all traitors," he said at last; "it was God's will. Come." And with a last look they went from the room.

From Other Magazines.

A STRANGE NESTING-PLACE.

THE annexed photograph shows an out-of-the-way place chosen by a pair of robins in which to build their nest, and was sent to "Country Life" by a contributor, who says: "When first the nest was finished, the bird was shut out at night; she flew into

my bedroom just above and laid an egg on the floor about 4 a.m. (I suppose as a protest). I had the smoking-room window left open after this, and the four following days she laid in the nest. Again, when her brood was hatched, and so big that they filled the nest, she stayed out, the window being shut; but, as she again came into my room about 4 a.m. and fluttered about till she woke me, I again had the smoking-room window left open at night, which apparently contented her."

THE PLEASURES OF MOTORING IN SPAIN.

IT is true that maps of Spain—may their makers be condemned to suffer as we did!—make no distinction between their various qualities. With them a road is a road, and a wide one a first-class one. And this seems a fitting place for a disquisition on vehicular traffic in Spain. Now, nine-tenths of it is drawn by mules, who are harnessed in single file, never less than three in a row, and generally five. The driver — excuse the word, which even now makes me smile—is either asleep in the plaited-grass bottom of the cart, or else chatting to his friends about half a mile behind. When the Daimler came near, aroused by the repeated *honk-honks* of the horn or electrified by my bugle, a blue-chinned, smiling head used to emerge from its comfortable inside and take steps to disentangle the team, which by that time was either in *echelon* formation, four-in-hand, or engaged in the grand chain of the lancers. — "C. B. FRY'S MAGAZINE."

EMBARRASSING.

"I ALWAYS hate to tell a story," said a well-known actor at a banquet, "because my listeners may have heard it before. It is like the case of a friend of mine. He is deaf, but tries to conceal his deafness. One night at a dinner the host told a story at which everybody roared, and my dear friend joined in and outroared the whole table, though in truth he hadn't heard a word. At the end of the laughter he held up his hand as a sign that he wanted to speak. 'That story,' he began, 'reminds me of another one——' And then the poor fellow went on and told the very same yarn the host had repeated only a minute before."—"TIT-BITS."

A MEXICAN POLICEMAN.

WE are so accustomed to the neat, smart appearance of our policemen that we are apt to overlook the fact that in less favoured countries the emissaries of the law are not always so spruce-looking. The dangerous-looking tatterdemalion seen in the accompanying photograph, for instance, is a constable of the police force of one of the States of Mexico. The photographer, seeing the worthy officer patrolling the streets, called him into his studio and snap-shotted him just as he was, in all the glory of his tattered uniform, worn-out boots, and unshaven face. — "WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE."

LUDICROUS LAW.

ASK a man "When is murder not murder?" and he will probably answer, "I give it up." But it is not a riddle, only part of one of those queer old laws which we are so loath to blue-pencil out of the statute books. If a person wilfully injures another, and the injured person dies within three hundred and sixty-six days, the aggressor may be charged with murder. But another day makes all the difference. If death does not take place for a year and a day after the injury, no charge of murder or manslaughter can result. Then to be a burglar it is necessary not only to "enter" but to "break." So when you forget to lock the front door or leave the drawing-room window open, and Bill Sikes strolls in and annexes the silver, you cannot prosecute him for "burglary." —"GRAND MAGAZINE."

The Enchanted Castle.

By E. Nesbit.

A Story for Children.

CHAPTER IX.

IT is not surprising that Mabel and Kathleen, conscientiously conducting one of the dullest dolls' tea-parties at which either had ever assisted, should suddenly, and both at once, have felt a strange, unreasonable, but quite irresistible desire to return instantly to the Temple of Flora—even at the cost of leaving the dolls' tea-service in an unwashed state, and only half the raisins eaten. They went—as one has to go when the magic impulse drives one—against their better judgment—against their wills almost.

And the nearer they came to the Temple of Flora, in the golden hush of the afternoon, the more certain each was that they could not possibly have done otherwise.

And this explains exactly how it was that when Gerald and Jimmy, holding hands in the darkness of the passage, uttered their first concerted yell, "just for the fun of the thing," that yell was instantly answered from outside.

A crack of light showed in that part of the passage where they had least expected the door to be. The stone door itself swung slowly open, and they were out of it, in the Temple of Flora, blinking at the good daylight, an unresisting prey to Kathleen's embraces and the questionings of Mabel.

"Now," said Gerald, "we'll go home and seal up the ring in an envelope."

"Look here," said Mabel, "let's just put it back in the treasure room and have done with it."

So they trooped up to the castle, and Mabel once more worked the spring that let down the panelling and showed the jewels, and the ring was put back among the odd dull ornaments that Mabel had once said were magic.

"How innocent it looks!" said Gerald. "You wouldn't think there was any magic about it. It's just like any silly old ring. I wonder if what Mabel said about the other things is true? Suppose we try."

"*Don't*," said Kathleen. "*I* think magic things are spiteful. They just enjoy getting you into tight places."

"I'd like to try," said Mabel, "only—well, everything's been rather upsetting, and I've forgotten what I said anything was."

So had the others. Perhaps that was why, when Gerald said that a bronze buckle laid on the foot would have the effect of seven-league boots, it didn't; when Jimmy, a little of the City man he had been clinging to him still, said that the steel collar would ensure your always having money in your pockets, his own remained empty; and when Mabel and Kathleen invented qualities of the most delightful nature for various rings and chains and brooches, nothing at all happened.

"It's only the ring that's magic," said Mabel at last; "and, I say!" she added, in quite a different voice.

"What?"

"Suppose even the ring isn't!"

"But we know it is."

"I don't," said Mabel. "I believe it's not to-day at all. I believe it's the other day—we've just dreamed all these things. It's the day I made up that nonsense about the ring."

"Don't take any notice of her," said Gerald. "She's only trying to be funny."

"No, I'm not," said Mabel; "but I'm inspired like a Python or a Sibylline lady. What ring?"

"The wishing-ring," said Kathleen; "the invisibility-ring."

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"Don't you see *now*," said Mabel, her eyes wider than ever, "the ring's what you *say* it is? That's how it came to make us invisible—I just said it. Oh, we can't leave it here, if that's what it is. It isn't stealing, really, when it's as valuable as that, you see. Say what it is."

"It's a wishing-ring," said Jimmy.

"We've had that before—and you had your silly wish," said Mabel, more and more excited. "I say it isn't a wishing-ring. I say it's a ring that makes the wearer four yards high."

She had caught up the ring as she spoke, and even as she spoke the ring showed high above the children's heads on the finger of an impossible Mabel, who was, indeed, twelve feet high.

"Now you've done it," said Gerald—and he was right. It was in vain that Mabel asserted that the ring was a wishing-ring. It quite clearly wasn't. It was what she had said it was.

"And you can't tell at all how long the effect will last," said Gerald. "Look at the invisibleness." This is difficult to do, but the others understood him.

"It may last for days," said Kathleen. "Oh, Mabel, it *was* silly of you!"

"That's right, rub it in," said Mabel, bitterly; "you should have believed me when I said it was what I said it was. Then I shouldn't have had to show you, and I shouldn't be this silly size. What am I to do now, I should like to know?"

"We must conceal you till you get your right size again — that's all," said Gerald, practically.

"Yes—but *where?*" said Mabel, stamping a foot twenty-four inches long.

"In one of the empty rooms? You wouldn't be afraid?"

"Of course not," said Mabel. "It's a good thing auntie gave me leave to stay the night with you. As it is, one of you will have to stay the night with me. I'm not going to be left alone, the silly height I am."

Height was the right word; Mabel had said "four yards high"—and she *was* four yards high. But she was not any thicker than when her height was four feet seven, and the effect was, as Gerald remarked, "wonderfully worm-like." Her clothes had, of course, grown with her, and she looked like a little girl reflected in one of those long bent mirrors at Rosherville Gardens, that make stout people look so happily slender and slender people so sadly scraggy. She sat down suddenly on the floor, and it was like a four-fold foot-rule folding itself up.

"It's no use sitting there," said Gerald.

"I'm not sitting here," retorted Mabel; "I only got down so as to be able to get through the door. It'll have to be hands and knees through most places for me now, I suppose."

"Aren't you hungry?" Jimmy asked, suddenly.

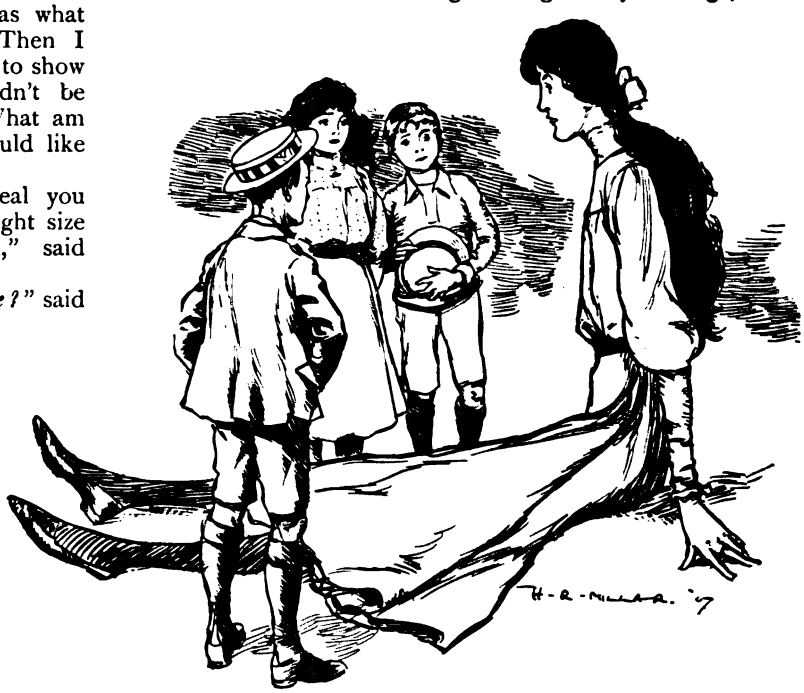
"I don't know," said Mabel, desolately; "it's—it's such a long way off!"

"Well, I'll scout," said Gerald; "if the coast's clear——"

"Look here," said Mabel, "I think I'd rather be out of doors till it gets dark."

"You *can't*. Someone's certain to see you."

"Not if I go through the yew-hedge," said



"SHE SAT DOWN SUDDENLY ON THE FLOOR, AND IT WAS LIKE A FOUR-FOLD FOOT-RULE FOLDING ITSELF UP."

Mabel. "There's a yew-hedge with a passage along its inside like the box-hedge in 'The Luck of the Vails.'"

"In *what?*"

"'The Luck of the Vails.' It's a ripping book. It was that book first set me on to hunt for hidden doors in panels and things. If I crept along that on my front, like a serpent—it comes out amongst the rhododendrons, close by the dinosaurus — we could camp there."

"There's tea," said Gerald, who had had no dinner.

"That's just what there isn't," said Jimmy, who had had none either.

"Oh, you *won't* desert me!" said Mabel. "Look here — I'll write to auntie. She'll give you the things for a picnic, if she's there and awake. If she isn't, one of the maids will."

So she wrote on a leaf of Gerald's invaluable pocket-book :—

"DEAREST AUNTIE,—Please may we have some things for a picnic? Gerald will bring them. I would come myself, but I am a little tired. I think I have been growing rather fast.—Your loving niece, MABEL.

"P.S.—Lots, please, because some of us are very hungry."

It was found difficult, but possible, for Mabel to creep along the tunnel in the yew-hedge. Possible, but slow, so that the three had hardly had time to settle themselves among the rhododendrons and to wonder bitterly what on earth Gerald was up to, to be such a time gone, when he returned, panting under the weight of a covered basket. He dumped it down on the fine grass carpet, groaned, and added, "But it's worth it. Where's our Mabel?"

The long, pale face of Mabel peered out from rhododendron leaves, very near the ground.

"I look just like anybody else like this, don't I?" she asked, anxiously; "all the rest of me's miles away, under different bushes."

"We've covered up the bits between the bushes with bracken and leaves," said Kathleen, avoiding the question; "don't wriggle, Mabel, or you'll waggle them off."

Jimmy was eagerly unpacking the basket. It was a generous tea. A long loaf, butter in a cabbage-leaf, a bottle of milk, a bottle of water, cake, and large, smooth, yellow gooseberries in a box that had once held an extra-sized bottle of somebody's matchless something for the hair and moustache. Mabel cautiously advanced her incredible arms from the rhododendron and leaned on one of her spindly elbows. Gerald cut bread and butter, while Kathleen obligingly ran round, at Mabel's request, to see that the green coverings had not dropped from any of the remoter parts of Mabel's person. Then there was a happy, hungry silence, broken only by those brief, impassioned suggestions natural to such an occasion :—

"More cake, please."

"Milk ahoy, there."

"Chuck us the goose-gogs."

Everyone grew calmer—more contented with its lot. A pleasant feeling, half tiredness and half restfulness, crept to the extremities of the party. Even the unfortunate Mabel was conscious of it in her remote feet, that lay crossed under the third rhododendron to the north-north-west of the tea-party. Gerald did but voice the feelings of the others when he said, not without regret :—

"Well, I'm a new man, but I couldn't eat so much as another goose-gog if you paid me."

"*I* could," said Mabel; "yes, I know they're all gone, and I've had my share. But I *could*. It's me being so long, I suppose."

A delicious after-food peace filled the summer air. At a little distance the green-lichened grey of the vast stone dinosaurus showed through the shrubs. He, too, seemed peaceful and happy. Gerald caught his stone eye through a gap in the foliage. His glance seemed somehow sympathetic.

"I dare say he liked a good meal in his day," said Gerald, stretching luxuriously.

"Who did?"

"The dino what's-his-name," said Gerald.

"He had one to-day," said Kathleen, and giggled.

"Yes—didn't he?" said Mabel, giggling also.

"You mustn't laugh lower than your chest," said Kathleen, anxiously, "or your green stuff will joggle off."

"What do you mean—a meal?" Jimmy asked, suspiciously. "What are you sniggering about?"

"Oh," said Kathleen, "it's only that we fed the dinosaurus through the hole in his stomach, with the clothes the Ugly Wuglies were made of."

"We can take them home with us, then," said Gerald, chewing the white end of a grass stalk, "so that's all right."

"Look here," said Kathleen, suddenly; "I've got an idea. Let me have the ring a bit. I won't say what the idea is, in case it doesn't come off, and then you'd say I was silly. I'll give it back before we go."

"Oh, but you aren't going yet," said Mabel, pleading. She pulled off the ring. "Of course," she added, earnestly, "I'm only too glad for you to try any idea, however silly it is."

Now Kathleen's idea was quite simple. It was only that perhaps the ring would change its powers if someone else renamed it—someone who was not under the power of its enchantment. So the moment it had passed from the long, pale hand of Mabel to one of her own fat, warm, red paws, she jumped up, crying, "Let's go and empty the dinosaurus *now*," and started to run swiftly towards that prehistoric monster. She had a good start. She wanted to say aloud, yet so that the others could not hear her, "This is a wishing-ring. It gives you any wish you choose." And she did say it. And no one heard her, except the birds and a squirrel or two, and perhaps a stone faun, whose pretty face seemed to turn a laughing look on her as she raced past its pedestal.

The way was uphill, it was sunny, and Kathleen had run her hardest, though her brothers caught her up before she reached the great black shadow of the dinosaurus. So that when she did reach that shadow she was very hot indeed.

"I'll get up and move the things down, because I know exactly where I put them," she said.

Gerald made a back, Jimmy assisted her to climb up, and she disappeared through the hole into the dark inside of the monster. In a moment a shower began to descend from the opening—a shower of empty waistcoats, trousers with wildly waving legs, and coats with sleeves uncontrolled.

"KATHLEEN HAD HER WISH. SHE WAS A STATUE."

"Heads below," called Kathleen, and down came walking-sticks and golf-sticks and hockey-sticks and broomsticks, rattling and chattering to each other as they came.

"Come on," said Jimmy.

"Hold on a bit," said Gerald. "I'm coming up." He caught the edge of the hole above in his hands and jumped. Just as he got his shoulders through the opening and his knees on the edge he heard Kathleen's boots on the floor of the dinosaurus's inside, and Kathleen's voice, saying :—

"Isn't it jolly cool in here? I suppose statues are always cool. I do wish I was a statue. Oh!"

The "Oh!" was a cry of horror and anguish. And it seemed to be cut off very short by a dreadful stony silence.

"What's up?" Gerald asked. But in his heart he knew. He climbed up into the great hollow. In the little light that came up through the hole he could see something white against the grey of the creature's sides. He felt in his pockets, still kneeling, struck a match, and when the blue of its flame changed to clear yellow he looked up to see what he had known he would see — the face of Kathleen, white, stony, and lifeless. Her hair was white, too, and her hands, clothes, shoes — everything was white, with the hard, cold whiteness of marble. Kathleen had her wish. She was a statue. There was a long moment of perfect stillness in the inside of the dinosaurus. Gerald could not speak. It was too sudden, too terrible. It was worse than anything that

had happened yet. Then he turned and spoke down out of that cold, stony silence to Jimmy, in the green, sunny, rustling, live world outside.

"Jimmy," he said, in tones perfectly ordinary and matter of fact, "Kathleen's gone and said that ring was a wishing-ring. And so it was, of course. I see now what she was up to, starting running like that. And then the young duffer went and wished she was a statue."

"And is she?" asked Jimmy, below.

"Yes," said Gerald. "Come on—let's go and tell Mabel."

To Mabel, therefore, who had discreetly remained with her long length screened by rhododendrons, the two boys returned and broke the news. They broke it as one breaks a bottle with a pistol-shot.

"Oh, my goodness!" said Mabel, and writhed through her long length so that the leaves and fern tumbled off in little showers, and she felt the sun suddenly hot on the backs of her legs. "What next? Oh, my goodness!"

"She'll come all right," said Gerald, with outward calm.

"Yes; but what about *me?*" Mabel urged. "I haven't got the ring. And my time will be up before hers is. Couldn't you get it back? Can't you get it off her hand? I'd put it back on her hand the very minute I was my right size again—faithfully I would."

"Well, it's nothing to blub about," said Jimmy, answering the sniffs that had served her in this speech for commas and full-stops; "not for you, anyway."

"Ah, you don't know," said Mabel; "you don't know what it is to be as long as I am. Do—do try and get the ring. After all, it is my ring more than any of the rest of yours, anyhow, because I did find it, and I did say it was magic."

The sense of justice, always present in the breast of Gerald, awoke to this appeal.

"I expect the ring's turned to stone—her boots have, and all her clothes. But I'll go and see. Only if I can't get it, I can't, and it's no use your making a silly fuss."

The first match lighted inside the dinosaurus showed the dark ring on the white hand of the statuesque Kathleen.

The fingers were stretched straight out. Gerald took hold of the ring, and, to his surprise, it slipped easily off the cold, smooth marble finger.

"I say, Cathy, old girl, I am sorry," he said, and gave the marble hand a squeeze. Then it came to him that perhaps she could hear him. So he told the statue exactly what he and the others meant to do. This helped to clear up his ideas as to what he and the others did mean to do. Therefore, when, after thumping the statue hearteningly on its marble back, he returned to the rhododendrons, he was able to give his orders with the clear precision of a born leader, as he later said. And since the others had, neither of them, thought of any plan, his plan was accepted, as the plans of born leaders are apt to be.

"Here's your precious ring," he said to Mabel. "Now you're not frightened of anything, are you?"

"No," said Mabel, in surprise. "I'd forgotten that. Look here, I'll stay here or farther up in the wood if you'll leave me all the coats, so that I sha'n't be cold in the night. Then I shall be here when Kathleen comes out of the stone again."

"Yes," said Gerald, "that was exactly the born leader's idea."

"You two go home and tell mademoiselle that Kathleen's staying at the Towers. She is."

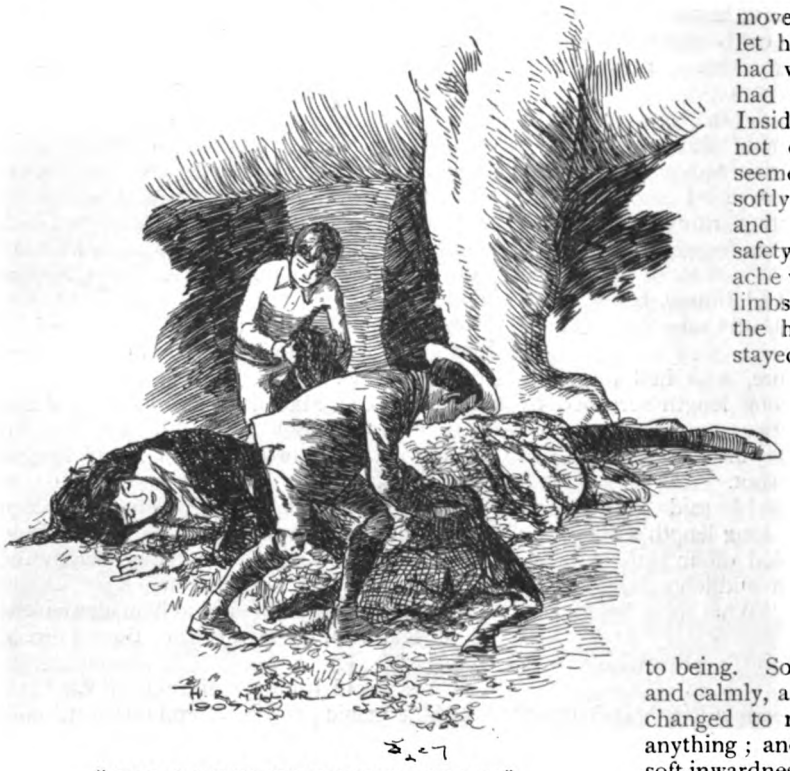
"Yes," said Jimmy, "she certainly is."

"The magic goes in seven-hour lots," said Gerald; "your invisibility was twenty-one hours—mine fourteen—Eliza's seven. When it was a wishing-ring it began with seven. But there's no knowing what number it will be now. So there's no knowing which of you will come right first. Anyhow, we'll sneak out by the cistern-window and come down the trellis, after we've said good night to mademoiselle, and come and have a look at you before we go to bed. I think you'd better come close up to the dinosaurus and we'll leaf you over before we go."

Mabel crawled into cover of the taller trees, and there stood up looking as slender as a poplar and as unreal as the wrong answer to a sum in long division. It was to her an easy matter to crouch beneath the dinosaurus and, putting her head up through the opening, thus to behold the white form of Kathleen.

"It's all right, dear," she told the stone image. "I shall be quite close to you. You call me as soon as you feel you're coming right again."

The statue remained motionless, as statues usually do, and Mabel withdrew her head, lay down, was covered up, and left. The boys went home. It was the only reasonable thing to do. It would never have done for mademoiselle to become anxious and set the police on their track. Everyone felt that.



"MABEL LAY DOWN, WAS COVERED UP, AND LEFT."

The shock of discovering the missing Kathleen not only in a dinosaurus's stomach, but, further, in a stone statue of herself, might well have unhinged the mind of any constable, to say nothing of the mind of mademoiselle, which, being foreign, would necessarily be a mind more light and easy to upset. While as for Mabel——

"Well, to look at her as she is now," said Gerald, "why, it would send anyone off their chump—except us."

"We're different," said Jimmy; "our chumps have had to jolly well get used to things. It would take a lot to upset us now."

"Poor old Cathy, all the same," said Gerald.

"Yes, of course," said Jimmy.

The sun had died away behind the black trees and the moon was rising. Mabel, her endless length covered with coats, waistcoats, and trousers laid along it, slept peacefully in the chill of the evening. Inside the dinosaurus Kathleen, alive in her marble, slept too. She had heard Gerald's words—had seen the lighted matches. She was Kathleen just the same as ever. Only she was Kathleen in a case of marble that would not let her move. It would not have let her cry, even if she had wanted to. But she had not wanted to cry. Inside, the marble was not cold or hard. It seemed, somehow, to be softly lined with warmth and pleasantness and safety. Her back did not ache with stooping. Her limbs were not stiff with the hours that they had stayed moveless. Everything was well—better than well. One had only to wait quietly and quite comfortably and one would come out of this stone case, and once more be the Kathleen one had always been used to being. So she waited happily and calmly, and presently waiting changed to not waiting—to not anything; and, close held in the soft inwardness of the marble, she slept as peacefully and calmly as though she had been lying in her own bed.

She was awakened by the fact that she was not lying in her own bed—was not, in fact, lying at all—by the fact that she was standing and that her feet had pins and needles in them. Her arms, too, held out in that odd way, were stiff and tired. She rubbed her eyes, yawned, and remembered. She had been a statue—a statue inside the stone dinosaurus.

"Now I'm alive again," was her instant conclusion, "and I'll get out of it."

She sat down, put her feet through the hole that showed faintly grey in the stone beast's underside, and as she did so a long, slow lurch threw her sideways on the stone where she sat. *The dinosaurus was moving!*

"*Oh!*" said Kathleen inside it, "how dreadful! It must be moonlight, and it's come alive, like Gerald said."

It was indeed moving. She could see through the hole the changing surface of grass and bracken and moss, as it waddled heavily along. She dared not drop through the hole while it moved, for fear it should crush her to death with its gigantic feet. The huge beast swung from side to side. It was going faster; it was no good,

she dared not. Anyhow, they must be quite away from Mabel by now. Faster and faster went the dinosaurus. The floor of its stomach sloped. They were going downhill. Twigs cracked and broke as it pushed through a belt of evergreen oaks; gravel crunched, ground beneath its stony feet. Then stone met stone. There was a pause. A splash! They were close to water—the lake where by moonlight Hermes fluttered and fauns and dinosaurus swam together. Kathleen dropped swiftly through the hole on to the flat marble that edged the basin, rushed sideways, and stood panting in the shadow of a statue's pedestal. Not a moment too soon, for even as she crouched the monster lizard slipped heavily into the water, drowning a thousand smooth, shining lily pads, and swam away towards the central island.

"Be still, little lady. I leap!" The voice came from the pedestal, and next moment Phœbus had jumped from it and landed a couple of yards away.

"THE MONSTER LIZARD SLIPPED HEAVILY INTO THE WATER."

"You are new," said Phœbus, over his graceful shoulder. "I should not have forgotten you if once I had seen you."

"I am," said Kathleen, "quite, quite new. And I didn't know you could talk."

"Why not?" Phœbus laughed. "You can talk."

"But I'm alive."

"Am I not?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, I suppose so," said Kathleen, distracted, but not afraid; "only I thought you had to have the ring on before one could even see you move."

Phœbus seemed to understand her, which was rather to his credit, for she had certainly not expressed herself with clearness.

"Ah, that's for mortals," he said. "*We* can hear and see each other in the few moments when life is ours. That is a part of the beautiful enchantment."

"But I am a mortal," said Kathleen.

"You are as modest as you are charming," said Phœbus Apollo, absently; "the white water calls me! I go." And the next moment rings of liquid silver spread across the lake; widening and widening, from the spot where the white joined hands of the Sun-god had struck the water as he dived.

Kathleen turned and went up the hill towards the rhododendron bushes. She must find Mabel, and they must go home at once. If only Mabel was of a size that one could conveniently take home with one! Most likely, at this hour of enchantments, she was. Kathleen, heartened by the thought, hurried on. She passed through the rhododendron bushes, remembered the pointed, painted paper face that had looked out from the glossy leaves, expected to be frightened—and wasn't. She found Mabel easily enough, and much more easily than she would have done had Mabel been as she wished to find her. For quite a long way off, in the moonlight, she could see that long and worm-like form, extended to its full twelve feet—and covered with coats and trousers and waistcoats. Mabel looked like a drain-pipe that

has been covered in sacks in frosty weather. Kathleen touched her long cheek gently, and she woke.

"What's up?" she said, sleepily.

"It's only me," Kathleen explained.

"How cold your hands are!" said Mabel.

"Wake up," said Kathleen, "and let's talk."

"Can't we go home now? I'm awfully tired, and it's so long since tea-time."

"*You're* too long to go home yet," said Kathleen, sadly, and then Mabel remembered.

She lay with closed eyes—then suddenly she stirred and cried out:—

"Oh, Cathy, I feel so funny—like one of those horn snakes when you make it go short to get it into its box. I am—yes—I know I am."

She was; and Kathleen, watching her, agreed that it was exactly like the shortening of a horn spiral snake between the closing hands of a child. Mabel's distant feet drew near — Mabel's long, lean arms grew shorter — Mabel's face was no longer half a yard long.

"You're coming right—you are. Oh, I am so glad!" cried Kathleen.

"I know I am," said Mabel; and as she said it she became once more Mabel—not only in herself, which, of course, she had been all the time, but in her outward appearance.

"You are all right. Oh, hooray! hooray! I *am* so glad," said Kathleen, kindly; "and now we'll go home at once, dear."

"Go home?" said Mabel, slowly sitting up and staring at Kathleen with her big dark eyes. "Go home—like that?"

"Like what?" Kathleen asked, impatiently.

"Why, *you*," was Mabel's odd reply.

"I'm all right," said Kathleen. "Come on."

"Do you mean to say you don't know?" said Mabel. "Look at yourself — your hands—your dress—everything."

Kathleen looked at her hands. They were of marble whiteness. Her dress, too—her shoes, her stockings, even the loose ends of her hair. She was white as new-fallen snow.

"What is it?" she asked, beginning to tremble. "What am I all this horrid colour for?"

"Don't you see? Oh, Cathy, don't you see? You've *not* come all right. You're a statue still."

"'WHAT IS IT?' SHE ASKED, BEGINNING TO TREMBLE. 'WHAT AM I ALL THIS HORRID COLOUR FOR?'"

"I'm not—I'm alive—I'm talking to you."

"I know you are, darling," said Mabel, soothing her as one soothes a fractious child. "That's because it's moonlight."

"But you can see I'm alive."

"Of course I can. I've got the ring."

"But I'm all right; I *know* I am."

"Don't you see," said Mabel, gently, taking her white marble hand, "you're not all right? It's moonlight, and you're a statue, and you've just come alive with all the other statues. And when the moon goes down you'll just be a statue again. *That's* the difficulty, dear, about our going home again."

(To be continued.)

"THE EVIL EYE." The Strange Case of the Italian Premier.

By Ernest L. Scott.

MANY people have heard, no doubt, that Giovanni Giolitti, the Italian Prime Minister, is believed by many of his superstitious countrymen to have the evil eye. The notion is, of course, that the glance of a person thus "possessed" has the power of dealing misfortune and death, and a recent event, the latest in an extraordinary series, has greatly strengthened popular faith in the blighting effects of the Premier's gaze. This was the recent retirement from Giolitti's Cabinet of its youngest and most promising member, Signor Majorana, Minister of the Treasury, who was suddenly seized with so serious an illness that he resigned his portfolio and betook himself to Sicily to win back his health, if possible.

SIGNOR GIOVANNI GIOLITTI, THE ITALIAN PREMIER, WHO IN POPULAR OPINION IS POSSESSED OF "THE EVIL EYE."
From a Photograph.

Small wonder that this incident caused a sensation in Italy, for Majorana is the sixteenth statesman associated with Premier Giolitti since the latter's rise to power to be stricken down, if not by death, then by some serious mental or physical ailment.

Nine-tenths of Giolitti's countrymen are now convinced that he has the evil eye, and has it badly. It is absurd, of course—all superstitions are absurd; but the effects of them are worth serious consideration, and less credulous folk than the Italians would consider that there is something uncanny about the fate that has befallen so many of Giolitti's colleagues. A life insurance actuary, basing his deductions on facts and figures, would conclude that to become a member of Giolitti's Cabinet is a dangerous risk for which a big premium should be demanded.

Here is the actual record. In Giolitti's first Cabinet four of his Ministers died in office. In his second two died and four others were brought near to death's door. The Marquis Prinetti, Minister of Foreign Affairs, was stricken with apoplexy, and has never been well since. Balenzano, Minister of Public Works, developed gout of the heart, and his life was long despaired of. De Broglio, Minister of Finance, suffered severely from rheumatism. Wollamborg, Minister of the Treasury, had a mental breakdown, and became possessed of so many dangerous fancies that for some time his relations contemplated sending him to a lunatic asylum. In Giolitti's third Administration Signor Rosano, Minister of Justice, committed suicide by shooting himself. Another member of the Cabinet, Stelluti-Scala, died, and Tittoni, Minister of Foreign Affairs, was prostrated by cerebral congestion. Disease and sudden death still pursue Giolitti's colleagues in the present Cabinet. Massimini, the Minister of Finance, was seized with an apoplectic fit in the Chamber. Gallo, the Minister of Justice and Public Worship, was found dead in his bed one morning a few days later. When he retired he was apparently in excellent health. The doctors said it was apoplexy that had carried him off. The crowd said it was Giolitti's evil eye.

This record shows that, according to the percentage of casualties in actual warfare, the men who help Giolitti to run the Italian Government incur greater risks than do soldiers in battle. One would think that this would make it extremely difficult for him to fill his big billets. But it has no such effect. Political ambition outweighs both fear and superstition. Whenever he loses a Minister

SOME OF THE MEMBERS OF SIGNOR GIOLITTI'S CABINET, WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE FALLEN VICTIMS TO HIS "EVIL EYE." [*From Photos.*]

there is never any dearth of candidates who are willing to take the vacant post.

The fact that Giolitti has remained so long at the head of the Government of the most superstitious nation in Europe, despite the sinister reputation he has acquired, is proof that he has some uncommon stuff in him. He is built on a big scale; he stands over six feet high, and has breadth to match. His features are of the Semitic type, with a prominent arched nose. His eyes are black, but there is nothing about them to suggest the malignant power which is popularly attributed to them. They do not at all resemble those basilisk-like orbs, capable of withering one at a glance, with which sensational novelists are wont to endow their villains. In conjunction with the half-closed lids they convey the impression of shrewdness and insight. One would never associate ferocity with them. But in Italy the evil eye is not an attribute of any particular type of eyes. Their colour has nothing to do with it. Blue, grey, hazel, or black may be equally endowed with the blighting power. Nor is it necessary that the man who is supposed to have the evil eye should be an evil man. Saints as well as sinners may have it. It was long a matter of common belief that Pope Nono was cursed with the evil eye.

Giolitti was well on in middle life and had become a man to be reckoned with before anybody seems to have suspected him of having it. Born at the little town of Mondovi, near Cuneo, sixty-five years ago, the Italian Premier is one of those men, rare in European politics, who, from humble beginnings and with no adventitious aid, have forced their way, by sheer hard work, right to the top. The son of a small local official, who died soon after the child was born, he was brought up to the law. For some years the young lawyer continued to fill one legal post after another — always advancing. At forty he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies from Piedmont. In Parliament he spoke of what

he knew — dry, sternly practical subjects, such as banks and pensions and tariffs — with such success that when Crispi came into power, and wanted to replace an outgoing Minister of the Treasury, he chose an expert for the post in the person of the Piedmontese deputy.

At fifty — very early as age is reckoned in Italian political life — he was Prime Minister.

Then the evil-eye story which had been whispered by his enemies, though nothing in his career had happened to justify it, was revived. And things began to happen which made it stick. Disease and death invaded the Cabinet. Four of Giolitti's colleagues died. Political disaster overtook those that remained. It was his misfortune to be in power at a time when long-hushed-up scandals were suddenly and violently exposed. Public opinion demanded a scapegoat, and the Giolitti Cabinet was hurled from power. The story of the evil eye had received full confirmation.

For more than six years Giolitti was not only out of office, but almost out of public life. He spoke seldom in Parliament. His enemies numbered him among the "has beens." But he was far from being crushed. He was only biding his time. In 1901 he was on top again. This time no whispers were needed to revive the story of the evil eye. It had not been forgotten. And Fate again, as already told, continued to give it all the confirmation that credulity needed.

SIGNORA GIOLITTI, THE PREMIER'S WIFE.

From a Photograph.

His wife is never seen in society. He married her in the days of his early struggles with poverty, when nobody ever dreamed — least of all, probably, himself — that he would some day be Prime Minister of Italy. It is related of her that once in those days she saved from her meagre housekeeping allowance enough money to buy herself a silk dress. Before she bought it her husband received an invitation to an official function which necessitated the wearing of a dress suit. He did not possess one, nor the money to buy one. "I can do without a silk dress," said his wife, "but you must have a dress suit. If you do not attend that affair you may miss a chance of advancement." He demurred, for he is a good husband, but it ended, of course, in a dress suit being bought instead of a silk dress. That incident was typical of the part which Signora Giolitti has always played in her husband's life. She has, so far as the outside world is concerned, effaced herself in his interests. Conscious that she was not cut out to undertake the *rôle* which society ascribes to a statesman's wife, she has never attempted it. She has never even allowed herself to be presented at Court. For many years she devoted herself to making a happy home for her husband and children, and in that she has succeeded. The children — there are two of them, a son and a daughter — are grown up, and left the parental nest some years ago. The daughter is married and lives in Berlin. The son is a scientific chemist, and recently returned from a business trip to the United States.

The Premier and his wife live in comfortable, but not large, apartments just off the Piazza, behind the Basilica of Santa Maggiore. The rooms are plainly furnished, in the conventional style. There are no attempts at decorative effects. Books are everywhere; they show that Giolitti is a man of studious habits. But the only things in the rooms which indicate that Giolitti is a man of mark are the number of signed photographs of celebrities, several of them monarchs.

If he feels the odium which attaches to him because of the curse with which he is supposed to be afflicted he gives no sign of it. He is not the only Italian in public life who has been invested by popular imagination with the evil eye. The career of Count Morizi, a talented and ambitious deputy, has been entirely blighted by it. But Giolitti is too strong a man to be daunted by superstition.

CURIOSITIES.

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

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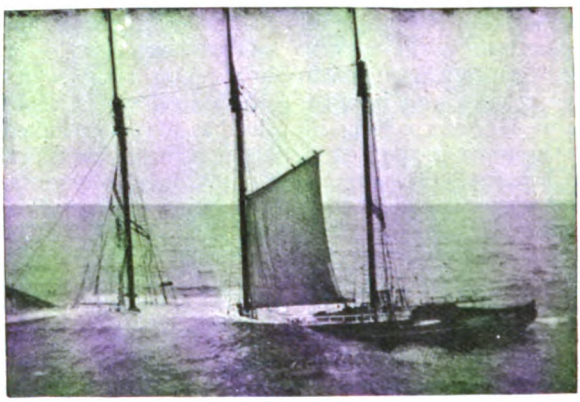
DERELICT!

I SEND you a snap-shot of a derelict I saw while on board the R.M.S. *Iverna*, coming from Boston to Liverpool quite recently. It is a rare thing to meet a derelict, and this one seemed in fairly good condition, but its history is unknown to me.—Miss G. Vera Keating, 43, Tilehurst Road, Reading.

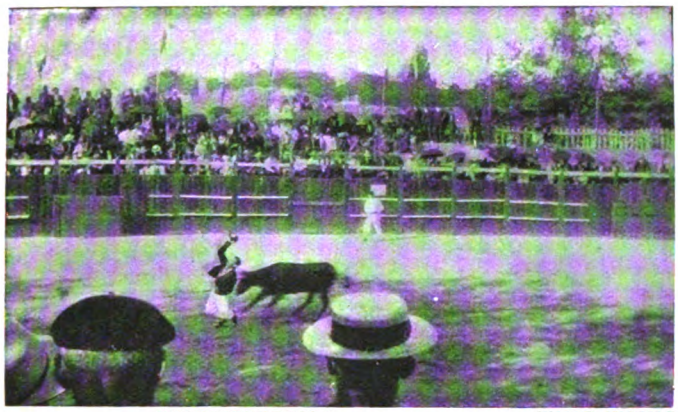


SUPERSTITION IN THE WEST COUNTRY.

THE Prize of Two Guineas which was offered to cyclists in *Tit-Bits* of May 11th last, for the most interesting paragraph, was won by Mr. S. B. Perry, The Hollies, St. Austell, Cornwall, who has since forwarded a photograph of the curious shop described in the paragraph mentioned and reprinted here: "In the Devonshire town of Modbury there is a butcher's shop which has no name, nor has it had one for the last 120 years. The reason affords a striking illustration of the superstitious nature of West Country folk. When this particular business was started the owner, for some reason or other, did not have his name inscribed on the premises. Whether this fact had anything to do with the success of the business or not it would be difficult to say. Trade, however, was brisk, and the butcher duly retired, leaving the nameless shop to his son. The business has been handed down from father to son for more than 120 years, but none of those into whose occupation it has come would have his name put up on any consideration, fearing—as, in fact, the present owner does to-day—that such a procedure might break the spell of good fortune with which the business has been favoured."

NORWEGIAN WEDDING SPOONS.

THIS pair of spoons and chain are carved from a single piece of wood, forming the Norwegian wedding spoons. On the morning of a wedding the bride and bridegroom eat a specially-prepared dish, each using one of the spoons, this being symbolical of unity.—E. F. G. Trethvethin, Park Road, Penarth.

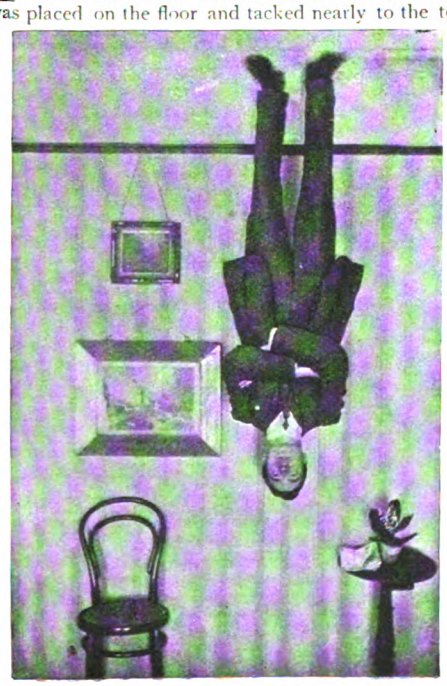


"COW-FIGHTING."

HERE is a photograph of a very popular form of sport in the South of France. It consists of a kind of cow-baiting, commonly called "Les Courses Landaises." Specially-trained cows of a very ferocious character are driven into the arena one at a time. A man in gold or silver-braided velvet then runs out and faces the beast, which, seeing him, charges furiously. He, however, stands perfectly still till she seems almost on top of him, when with a swift movement he jumps to one side, causing the beast to blunder by him. This is repeated with each cow in turn, different competitors trying their skill. The one who shows most courage and agility is proclaimed winner by the president and receives the prize. The sport has most of the danger of bull-fighting, without any cruelty to the animal.—Mr. F. K. Gebbie, F. Co. R.M.C., Camberley, Surrey.

A TOPSY-TURVY PHOTOGRAPH.

THIS photograph of a man standing on the ceiling of a room was obtained as follows: A sheet was placed on the floor and tacked nearly to the top of the skirting-board to give the picture-rail. The pictures, chair, and table were nailed upside-down to the wall. The lilies of the valley were tied to a nail through a cork which held the flower-pot to the table on which the paper was also tacked.—Mr. W. A. Chaplin, 4, Park Av., Willesden Green, N.W.

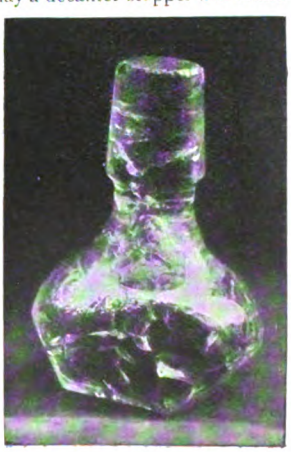


WHAT WOULD IZAAK WALTON HAVE SAID?

I AM enclosing a photograph that may be of interest for your Curiosity page. The object shown at the business end of the line is an oyster caught at the Umkomaas Beach, a pleasure resort about thirty miles from Durban. A Mr. Ulyatt was fishing in the sea from the rocks, and evidently the bait was resting on a bed of oysters, as they chiefly grow upon the rocks out here. Thinking his hook had caught on the rocks, as they very often do, he had great difficulty in pulling it off, and was very much surprised to find that an oyster had closed upon the bait. Being on the spot at the time I took a snap-shot, as no one there had ever heard of a similar occurrence before.—Mr. W. A. Constable, Box 87, Durban, Natal.

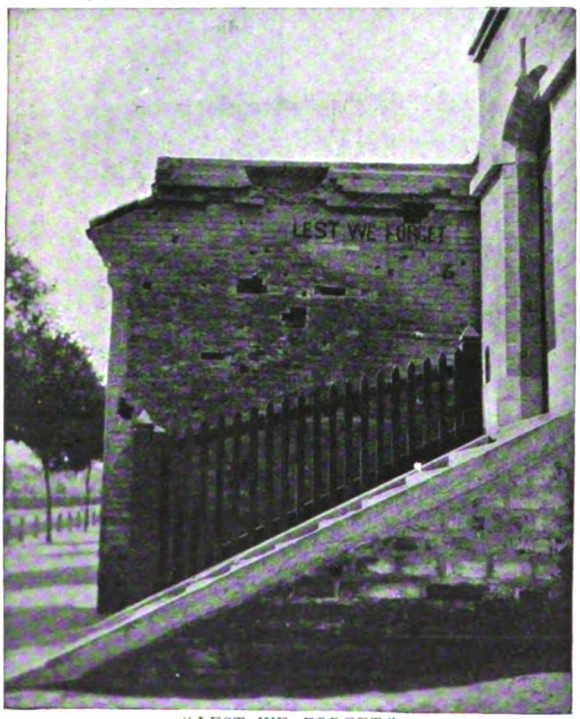
IS THIS THEORY CORRECT?

SOME time ago a fire broke out in a house in Colchester. Next day a decanter-stopper was found amongst the ruins, half full of dirty water. The only solution as to how the water got in is that the fire cracked the glass, the water from the engine being forced through the cracks; when the glass cooled contraction took place and shut the water in. The cracks can be seen in the photograph, while the dark part shows the water.—Rev. F. E. Robinson, The Shardeloes, Harsnett Road, Colchester.



WHAT IS IT?

THIS curious plant was found recently on a bank by the roadside near Great Berkhampstead, Herts; it was on the surface of the ground, among dead leaves and grass. The four remarkable-looking legs spring from the four points of a cone-like structure, but no roots are visible. It has been submitted to experts, but up to the present has not been identified with any living plant. Perhaps some of your readers may recognise it; if so, I shall be much obliged and grateful if they will kindly write to me.—Mr. J. T. Newman, Great Berkhampstead, Herts.



"LEST WE FORGET."

SINCE the siege of the British Legation in Peking in 1900 the surrounding walls have been repaired with the exception of one small corner, which is here reproduced. The legend since painted on the wall gives additional interest to the picture.—Mr. H. S. Cooke, Shanghai.

A STRA(N)DIVARIUS!

THE announcement of the sale of a "Strad" violin suggested to me the idea of making a STRAND violin, so I set to work in the following way. Having three old numbers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, I took a few leaves, stuck them together, and tried to make the front of the violin, but seeing I was on the wrong track I changed my plans and started thus. I took a small drawing-board with a mass of soddened paper in the middle and pommelled it into the shape of the bulge in an ordinary instrument. When this was dry I cut up a STRAND and glued each little piece one over the other until the desired thickness was obtained. When this was dry and solid I laid an ordinary violin on it, took the outline, and having raised it off the board cut it to the desired shape. The bottom of the violin underwent a somewhat similar process. The

sides between the top and bottom of the violin consist of a strip made of about six thicknesses of paper. The head is made of the backs of the three numbers, carefully turned page by page, glued solid, and then cut into shape. The little circles around the bottom of the instrument are small rolls of paper (one page of THE STRAND made four) glued on to receive the top, with an extra large roll at each end to receive the head and the knob at the string-plate at the bottom end. The finger-board was made separately and glued on after the violin itself was finished. The whole being completed, it was sand-papered and faced with absorbent tissue paper, sized, painted, and varnished. "THE STRAND" can be seen through the holes in front, where the paper sound-post is glued. This novel instrument now provides as good music as any ordinary violin. —Mr. W. Giles, 55, Winchester Street, S.W. Photo. by National Photo. Co., North End Road, Fulham.

A SNAIL'S TOMBSTONE.

I ENCLOSE a photograph showing a tombstone erected in honour of a rare snail, and also a cutting from a Belfast newspaper which imagined that

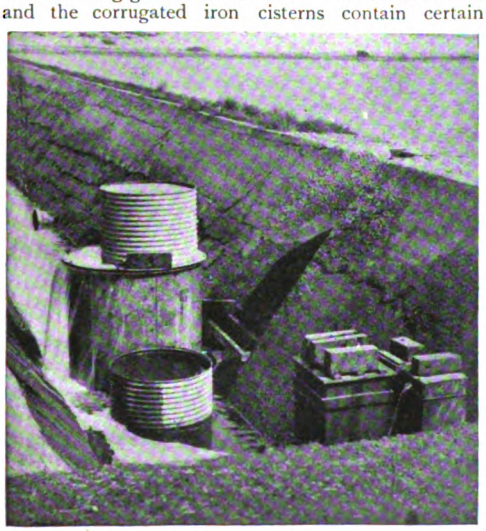
DEATHS.

ASPERSA—May 20th, at his residence, Belfast, Helix, last surviving son of Helix Aspersa, Esq., of Whitepark, Co. Antrim, aged 90 years. Funeral private. No flowers

"Aspersa" was a person, and included the notice under "Deaths" before they discovered their mistake! —Miss Lilian E. Bland, Carnmoney, Belfast.

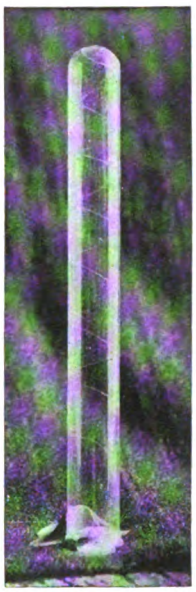
EXTRACTING GOLD FROM SEA WATER.

THIS photograph, which was taken at Hayling Island, shows the plant employed in the works for extracting gold from sea water. The three boxes and the corrugated iron cisterns contain certain chemicals, through which the sea water is forced at a high pressure through pipes leading from the sea on the right. The process is kept a profound secret and is guarded vigilantly. It is stated that one grain of pure gold is deposited from one thousand tons of sea water.—Mr. Leslie H. Adams, 11, Clarendon Road, Southsea.



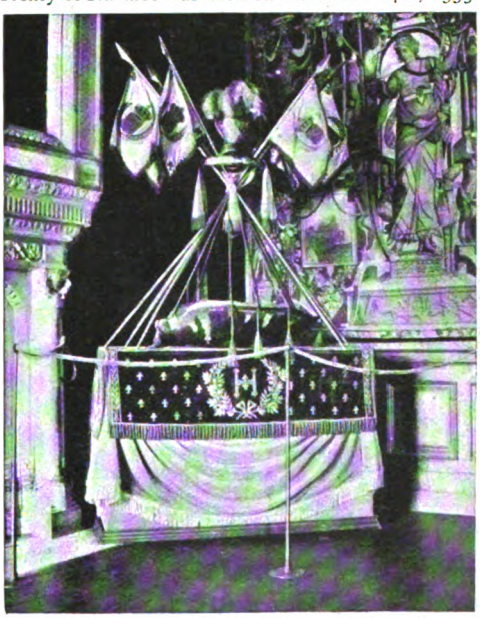
CURIOUS FRACTURE.

CAN any of your readers explain the extraordinary fracture of the test-tube shown in the accompanying photograph? My assistant in the University chemical-physiological laboratory forced the brush through the end of the tube whilst cleaning it. Instantly the tube cracked along the whole length in a very regular spiral, with just over seven complete turns. Perhaps the explanation lies in the process of manufacture?—Mr. Sydney W. Cole, Trinity College, Cambridge.



A ROYAL CRADLE.

PROBABLY the most remarkable Royal cradle in existence is that of Henry of Navarre, which is to be seen in the old Château at Pau, where, by the courtesy of the Governor of the Castle, I was allowed to photograph it. The cradle is made of a huge tortoise-shell, and it stands in the room in which Henry of Navarre was born on December 14th, 1553.



The story goes that during the Revolution the real cradle was hidden for safety, another tortoise-shell being put in its place; this was destroyed by the rebels, and after the Revolution the original cradle was again brought back to its present resting-place.—Lady Lawson, c/o Messrs. H. S. King and Co., 9, Pall Mall, London, S.W.

Hearts—King, knave, 3, 2.
Clubs—King, 10, 6, 3.
Diamonds—
Spades—Ace, knave, 6, 5, 2.

Hearts—6, 5, 4.
Clubs—Knave, 8, 7.
Diamonds—King, 10, 9, 8, 5, 4.
Spades—9.

A
Y Z
B

Hearts—Queen, 9, 7.
Clubs—Queen, 9, 4.
Diamonds—Knave, 3, 2.
Spades—Queen, 10, 8, 7.

Hearts—Ace, 10, 8.
Clubs—Ace, 5, 2.
Diamonds—Ace, queen, 7, 6.
Spades—King, 4, 3.

Hearts are trumps. Y led the 9 of spades. How many tricks can A B make against any defence of Y Z, the position of every card being known?

SOLUTION OF BRIDGE PROBLEM.

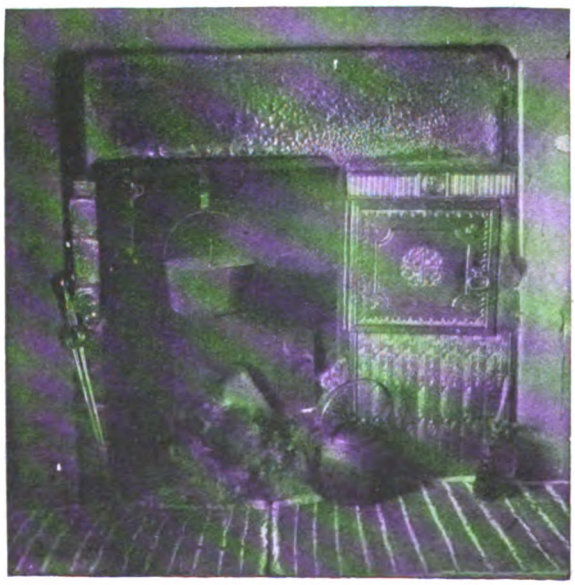
THE solution of the Bridge problem given in our last number (and repeated above) is that A B make a little slam, however Y Z play the defence.

Trick 1. Y, 9 spades; A, 2 spades; Z, 7 spades; B, king spades.
Trick 2. B, 6 diamonds; Y, 4 diamonds; A, 2 hearts; Z, 2 diamonds.
Trick 3. A, 3 clubs; Z, 4 clubs; B, ace clubs; Y, 7 clubs.
Trick 4. B, 7 diamonds; Y, 5 diamonds; A, jack hearts; Z, 3 diamonds.
Trick 5. A, king clubs; Z, queen clubs; B, 2 clubs; Y, 8 clubs.
Trick 6. A, king hearts; Z, 7 hearts; B, 8 hearts; Y, 4 hearts.
Trick 7. A, 3 hearts; Z, 9 hearts; B, 10 hearts; Y, 5 hearts.
Trick 8. B, ace hearts; Y, 6 hearts; A, 5 spades; Z, queen hearts.
Trick 9. B, 5 clubs; Y, jack clubs; A, 6 clubs; Z, 9 clubs.
Trick 10. Y, 8 diamonds.

At trick 10 Y must lead a diamond up to B's ace, queen; A discards two losing spades and makes the last two tricks with ace of spades and ten of clubs. If at trick 5 Z plays the 9 of clubs, then, after drawing trumps, B leads the ace of diamonds, and then puts Z in with the queen of clubs. Z has to lead up to A's tenace in spades, and A B still make the little slam.

A FIRE ALIGHT TWO HUNDRED YEARS!

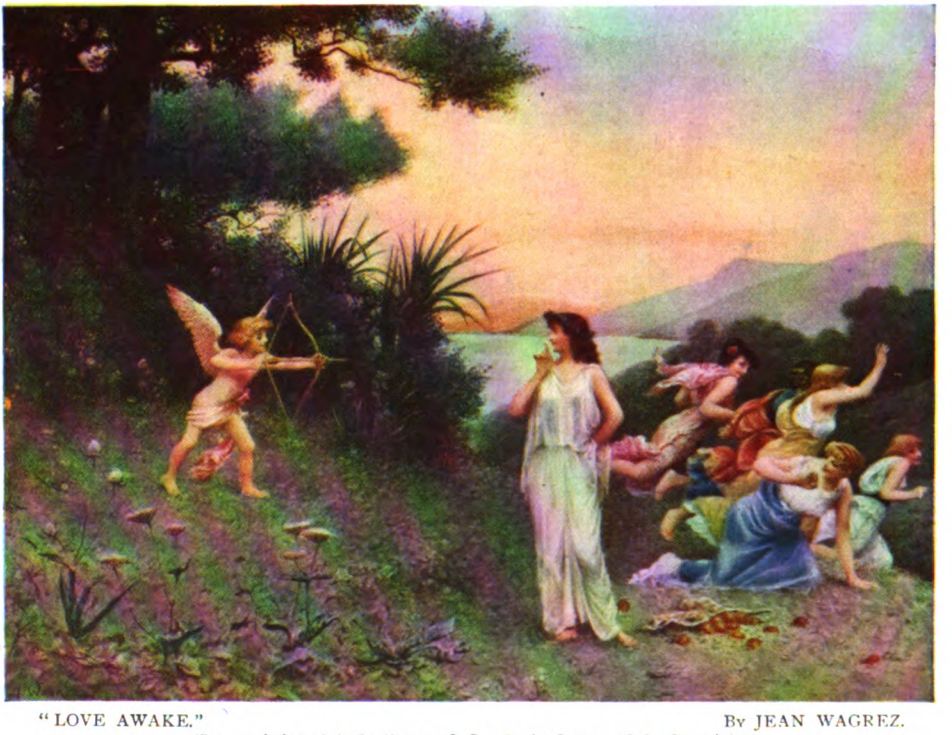
THIS photograph is of the well-known peat fire at the Chequers Inn, near Osmotherley. The oven heated by this furnace to this day bakes girdle cakes, which any visitor can sample. The fire, it is said, has not been out once in the last two hundred years! Photo. by Brittain & Wright, Stockton-on-Tees. — Mr. Reginald H. Cocks, Holly Lodge, Abingdon-on-Thames.



A STATUE WITH A TRAGIC STORY.

HIDDEN in a wood off the main road in the village of Grindleford, Derbyshire, stands a fine stone statue of a woman, which is associated with a tragic love-story. Many years ago there lived at the neighbouring Hall of Stoke a modest and beautiful maiden named Flora. Her wealthy suitors came from far and near, but she discarded all, giving her heart to a poor yeoman named Arthur. This so enraged one of her old admirers, a gay, worthless gallant, that he had his rival Arthur conveyed to a secret hiding-place near by, while, wrapped in the latter's cloak, he set out to keep an appointed tryst at a neighbouring well. He reached the spot, and taking the unsuspecting girl in his arms caressed her passionately. The rising moon, however, betrayed his true features, and she struggled violently to escape. Neither perceived the open well which they were approaching until too late. Both would have perished had not the villain flung her from him into the depths below. The murderer fled, and search was made for the missing girl. Some believed she had eloped with the nobleman, but Arthur, having escaped from confinement, told the story of the appointed tryst. The well was examined and the body found. To perpetuate the story of the crime, and that all might grieve for Flora's fate, the statue shown above was erected in the recesses of the wood, where it can be seen to-day.—Mr. F. W. Hornby, 51, Carlton Road, Hillsborough, Sheffield.

"LOVE ASLEEP." By JEAN WAGREZ.



"LOVE AWAKE." By JEAN WAGREZ.

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

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Some Popular French Paintings.

AMONG the pictures which tell a story—"incident pictures," as they have been called—there are those which, like Lady Diana Flamborough or Huckleberry Finn and his friend, may be said to "hunt in couples." Each is the complement or continuation of the other. Many painters almost make a speciality of this species of pictorial composition. Thus we have "Night and Morning," "Awake and Asleep," "Anticipation and Realization," and countless other themes. In every country these pictures enjoy a great popularity, but nowhere more so than in France. They furnish the element of surprise. One is the postulate and the other is the consequence. One furnishes the thesis and the other the antithesis. The one excites our pleasurable anticipation, the other realizes it.

One of the most charming painters of this species of twin *tableaux* is Jean Wagrez. The first of the pair herewith reproduced shows us a group of six beautiful maidens surveying with deep interest the recumbent figure of the god Cupid. The landscape bespeaks the height of summer. The air seems full of warmth and magic and the song of birds. The figures of the young women in their soft-hued draperies are graceful and fascinating to the eye. Their attitudes imply a mingled curiosity and surprise.

We turn swiftly from this picture to the next—and, lo! Cupid, arisen from his slumbers, has caught them all unawares. His bow is bent, the shaft is ready to fly, and all the maidens take tumultuously to their heels. All save she who, garbed in white, is proof against Love's arrows. In sweet rebuke is her forefinger raised. She will be fancy free—unsmitten to the end by Cupid's shafts. Yet it is towards her that the god persists in directing his arrow. We should almost have a third picture here to show us whether the haughty virgin falls a victim to love or no. Only perhaps the artist would labour under some difficulty in depicting such a dénouement.

M. Jean Leon Gérôme has won an inter-

"TWO MAJESTIES." By J. L. GÉRÔME.

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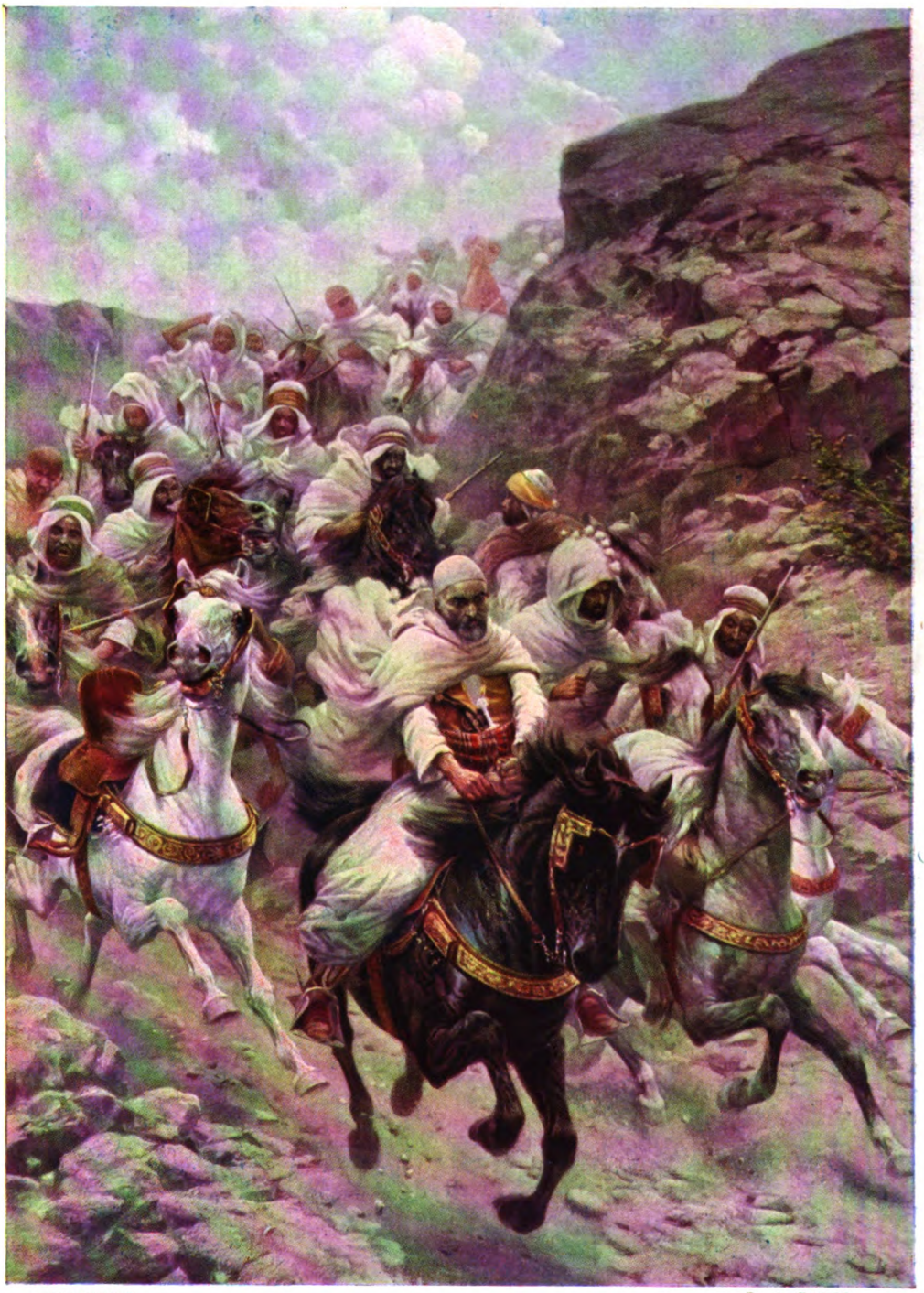


"ROUTED." By A. PARIS.

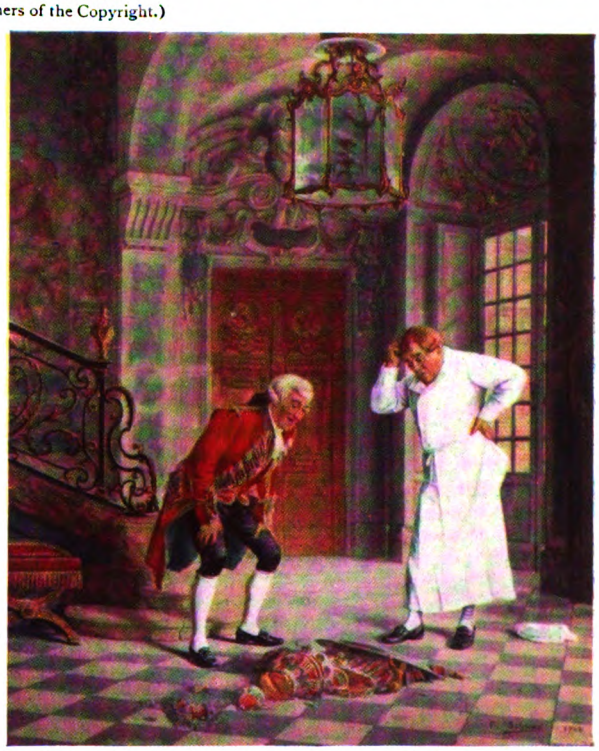
(By permission of Goupil & Co., 25, Bedford Street, Strand, London, Owners of the Copyright.)

"THE MASTERPIECE." By P. A. SCHAAN.
(By permission of A. Le Vasseur & Co. Paris, Owners of the Copyright.)

national reputation by reason of his many and powerfully diverse achievements in art. Few pictures more impressive, more significant than "Two Majesties" ever left his easel. There is the great illimitable desert, stretching away from the lonely lake in the heart of Africa. Seated on a rock in the foreground a huge lion gazes fixedly, perhaps angrily, at a blood-red sun. The dominion of the king of beasts is invaded by the blazing monarch of the heavens. The silent, ineffable solitude of the landscape is admirably expressed. The juxtaposition of these two majestic objects kindles the imagination. No such spectacle as this was, perhaps, ever witnessed by mortal eye, but its suggestiveness, its magic, may be felt by the most commonplace denizen of the dreariest slums of Europe's teeming cities.

And now we are whisked suddenly to the wild mountain passes of Morocco. The lawless deeds of the renowned bandit Raisuli are still so fresh in the public mind that any picture showing us something of the romance and mystery of those strange Eastern lands is doubly attractive. That the marvellous exploits of the Moors and Bedouins are occasionally marked by defeat as well as victory is shown by M. Paris's dramatic picture, "Routed," where we see the scattered fragments of a beaten host rushing pell-mell from the scene of their disaster. Through the wild mountain passes they gallop precipitately, daring not to draw rein while their triumphant foe thunders at their heels. To the left we see a riderless horse who, snorting with terror, has joined in the mad stampede, leaving maybe his master to bleed to death upon the sun-scorched plain. But, then — such is the fortune of war!

Another typical picture — this



"CATASTROPHE." By P. A. SCHAAN.
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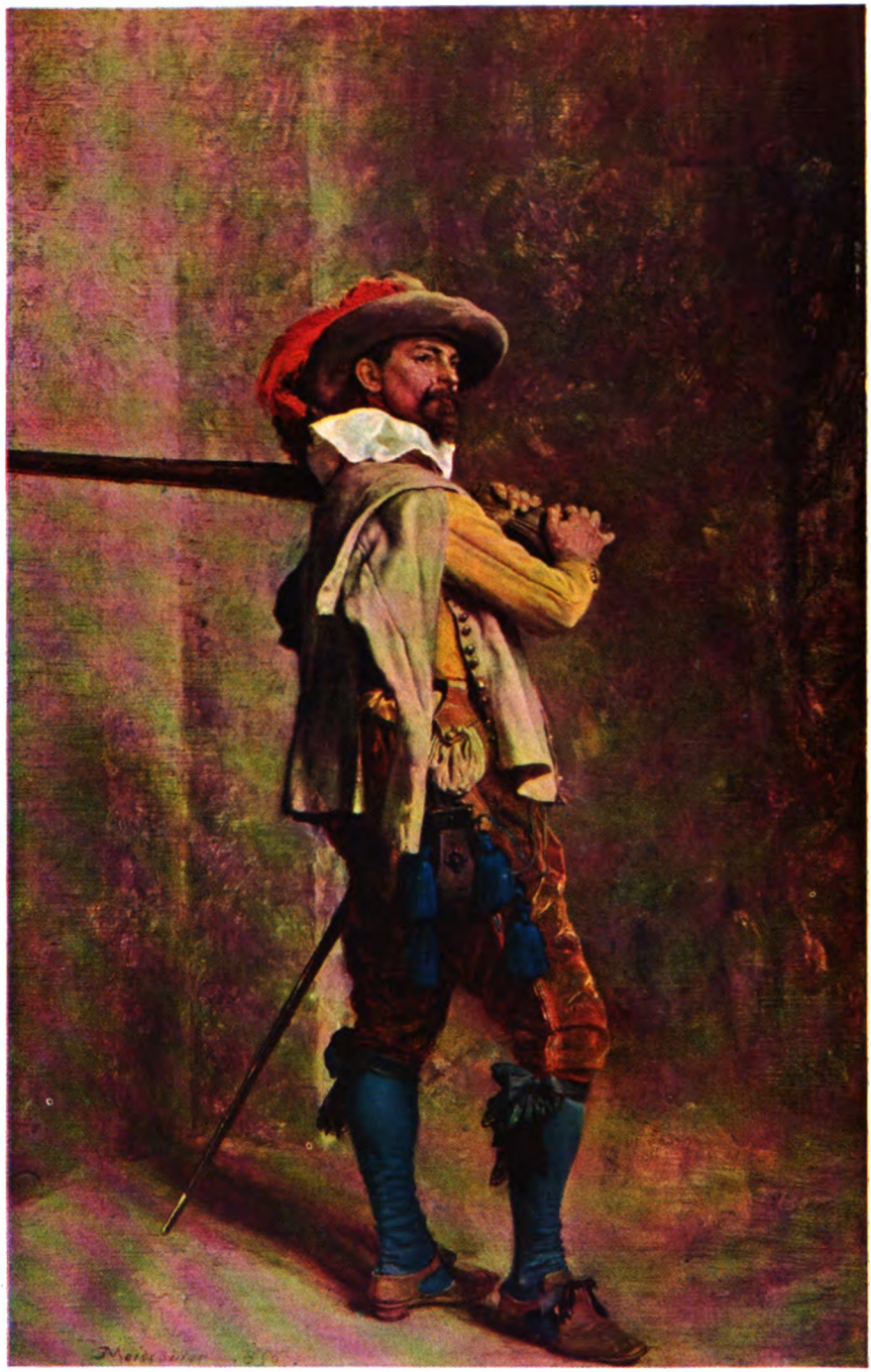
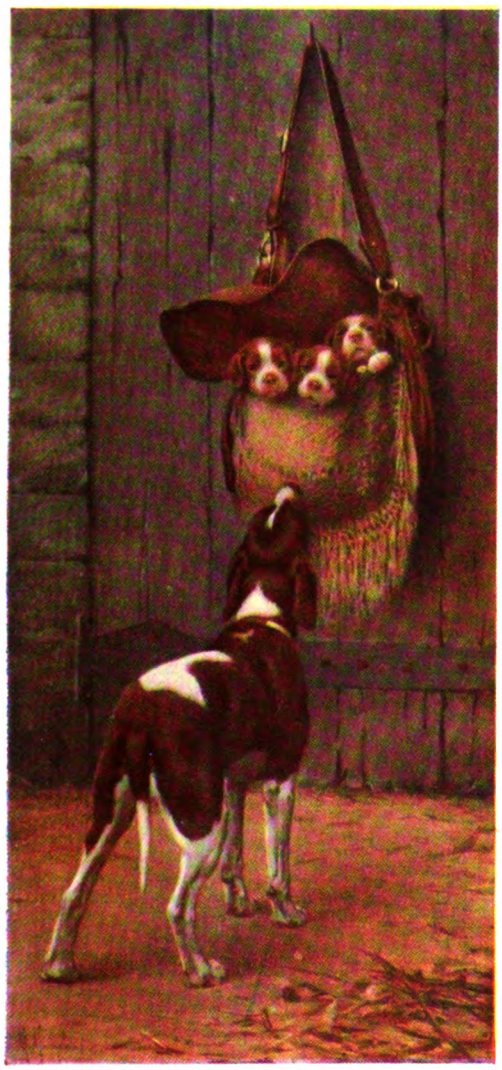


"MUSKETEER—TIME OF LOUIS XIII." By J. L. E. MEISSONIER.

time of a light comedy turn—engages our attention. We do not need Briand Savarin or the famous Soveral to remind us that the tragedies of the salon are as nothing to the tragedies of the kitchen. "What," sings Britain's famous librettist, "are broken hearts upstairs to broken tarts below?" The fractured galantine or the masterpiece of monumental confectionery destroyed may wring the bosom of a *chef* far more than any mere affair of the affections.

In M. Schaan's pictures a cook of Louis XV.'s reign has achieved a *chef d'œuvre* in sugar, flour, eggs, and rare fruits. In the great dining-room his master and a large company presumably await its arrival. Accordingly, at the close of the feast, M. Pierre takes it up gingerly, with joyous pride surging in his breast. On this he has staked his professional reputation. His inamorata, the pretty femme de toilette de Madame la Marquise, regards Pierre and the noble fruit of his genius with unfeigned admiration.

But alas for human hopes! Alas for the mutability of human affairs!—there is many a slip betwixt the cuisine and the salon. At



"ANXIETY."

"COVETOUSNESS."

By M. MOISAND.

(By permission of A. Le Vasseur & Co., Paris, Owners of the Copyright.)

"MORNING PARADE AT THE TOWER OF LONDON." By EDOUARD DETAILLE.
(By permission of Goupil & Co., 25, Bedford Street, Strand, London, Owners of the Copyright.)

the foot of the stairs in the grand hall Pierre's foot stumbles over a crack in the glistening marble tiles, and presto! the masterpiece is shattered into a hundred fragments. Overwhelming as the catastrophe is, it is rendered worse by the presence of Pierre's hated rival, the Marquess's lackey, who, unrestrained by decency, roars with laughter at the terrible mishap.

A great incentive was given to Meissonier's pictorial genius by the works of the elder, and greater, Dumas. It was while painting at Auteuil that the master of *genre* first made the acquaintance (between paper covers) of those doughty heroes of fiction—D'Artagnan, Athos, and Porthos. It was that, perhaps, more than any other single cause that sent Meissonier back for his subjects to the first half of the seventeenth century. A friend writing at his death relates how, sipping his sherbet on the boulevards, the painter would exclaim as the human kaleidoscope revolved itself before his gaze: "Look, there goes Porthos!" "Sapristi, what an admirable D'Artagnan!" "Buckingham to the life!" and so on.

When the "Musketeer" was painted in 1856 Meissonier was at the height of his powers and renown. Crossing the Place de la Concorde one afternoon in autumn his attention was attracted by a stalwart sergent de ville standing beneath a lamp-post and surveying with a lofty air the movements of the passers-by. Meissonier stopped and engaged him in conversation. The man was friendly, respectful—even deferential. Before they parted the painter said: "Can you come and see me when off duty?" "Certainly, M. Meissonier," was the response. The great artist smiled. "Then you know me!" "All the world knows M. Meissonier," said the sergent de ville. "I myself am a great admirer of his paintings. I go to see them whenever I can."

The upshot was a tri-weekly appointment was made at Meissonier's studio, and a few months later Paris and the world was richer by one of the painter's most masterly studies. "Afterwards," said Meissonier, "whenever I pass my sergent de ville at the foot of the Champs Élysées in his sombre cloak and *képi* and his dingy trousers, I find myself regretting more than ever the loss the world has sustained in bidding adieu in modern life to the costume of the thirteenth Louis. What a fine figure of a man my Lupin was, and how old Richelieu would have rejoiced in him, nobody, but for my picture, would ever have guessed."

Napoleon III. saw and admired the "Musketeer." Indeed, it was this picture that first attracted the Emperor to Meissonier's genius. Through his incomparable rococo pictures Meissonier first won fame; his representations of scenes from French military history were a later development of his art. In 1859 the Emperor selected the celebrated painter to accompany the French army to Italy. Napoleon was very fond of drawing parallels between himself and his mighty uncle, and it was his idea that Meissonier should paint a series of pictures wherein he should be depicted as enveloped in the mantle of "le petit caporal" and adding fresh deeds of glory to France's roll of fame.

One only, however, of the intended series was painted. This portrayed the Battle of Solferino, and represented the Emperor overlooking the contest from a height in the midst of his staff. But it was not the painter's fault that the succession of parallels was never completed. Napoleon had no further deeds of arms to record—so there was nothing else to depict! In 1870 Meissonier was again invited to accompany the French army. But after the first battle had been fought—and lost—the painter decided to return home. He had no objection to limning forth the great military triumphs of France, but to immortalize a mournful tale of disaster and retreat was more than his patriotic spirit could bear.

It has been said that, amongst all painters of modern times, Meissonier is the only one whose pictures during his lifetime fetched prices such as are reached only by the famous Old Masters of the greatest epochs. But, in spite of his later successes, his early struggle for fame was full of privations. When in 1832, tired of the tedious monotony of clerical life, he gave up his apprenticeship with Menier, the chocolate manufacturer, to become a painter, he had only fifteen francs a month to spend. It has been calculated, however, that during his lifetime he painted no less than twenty million francs' worth of pictures, and that for each centimetre of canvas he covered with pigments he received a tariff of about five thousand francs.

M. Moisand is one of the cleverest animal painters on the other side of the Channel. His pictures of homely canine incident enjoy a wide vogue, and in the first of the present pair, to which he has given the title "Inquiétude," a female pointer surveys with true maternal distress her three offspring flung in a pannier suspended on a stable-door. But in spite of her searching inquiries

the unhappy puppies are unable to throw any light on the situation, and continue to gaze with faces expressive of agonized appeal at their bewildered parent. "How will she get them down?" is the question busily revolving in her brain. Surely this provides an excellent companion query to the time-honoured conundrum of the donkey and the carrots.

In the second picture the cupidity of a couple of spaniels is aroused by the spectacle of the appetizing game hung just out of their reach. They are in very much the same predicament as our friend the pointer, and a solution satisfactory to the one would no doubt be equally successful in solving the others' difficulty.

Passing along the walls of our miniature Gallic picture gallery we next come to a familiar London scene delineated by a famous painter on the other side of the Channel. One of Meissonier's favourite pupils was M. Edouard Detaille, whose picture, "Morning Parade at the Tower of London," we have reproduced. His earlier works consisted chiefly of pretty little costume pictures from the Directoire period, but he soon abandoned these to devote himself entirely to the painting of those military pictures for which his name is famous.

One of the favourite haunts of M. Detaille during his residence in London was the Tower, and it is not unnatural that typical scenes in that celebrated fortress should have attracted the artist's skill. We are shown the Parade with Beauchamp Tower in the distance. A regiment is going through its early morning drill. To the left the regimental band fills the air with martial strains, while in the foreground a white-bearded Beefeater—veteran of a hundred fights—points out objects of interest to the assembled spectators.

"I am pleased," writes M. Detaille to THE STRAND, "to hear that you are reproducing in your interesting publication (THE STRAND MAGAZINE) a water-colour that I executed more years ago than I care to remember. Regarding the circumstances which led me to paint this subject, I was impressed by the picturesqueness of the scene, by the majestic environment, and the contrast of the brilliant uniforms, in a frame so severe as that of the Tower of London. It is a spectacle such as one can see in London alone, and which has no equivalent in any other place.

"This very typical *mise en scène* was truly seducing, and I did my best to reproduce it, going every day at the hour of parade to make sketches of the subject and water-colour studies, so as carefully to note the effect.

"All the figures were drawn from Nature, and, if the fashions have changed a little, it must be remembered that this picture was painted in 1880—which does not prevent me from accusing myself of making one of the belts very much too long—that of the officer in full uniform who stands to the left of the picture.

"In penning these lines, my eye falls on a photograph of the picture which hangs on the wall of my studio, and it recalls to me many happy memories, as are, indeed, all those I have carried away with me from every visit which I have made to England."

A great many of this artist's subjects are taken from the war of 1870, and his most celebrated work, "Salut aux Blessés," depicts a graceful incident from this otherwise grim campaign. A troop of wounded Prussian officers and men, marching along a country road, happen to pass a French general surrounded by his staff, who, with old-time chivalry, salute the wounded men.

It has been said that, as a delineator of martial scenes, M. Detaille surpasses even his great teacher. There is, declares one eminent critic, "less laboriousness and more lightness, less calculation and more sincerity" in his work. But it is not only as a military painter that M. Detaille excels. He is, in addition, a portrait painter of no mean order, and among the distinguished subjects who have sat to his brush may be mentioned the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, and the Emperor of Russia.

At M. Detaille's studio in Paris there is usually a great picture in course of preparation, involving the employment of many models and accessories. No pains are spared by the painter to secure the most absolute fidelity. A recent picture showed a great city of conflagration, with the fire brigade actively engaged in quelling the flames. To obtain his effects hundreds of sketches had to be taken at night while a great bonfire lit up the swarthy, helmeted visages of the firemen models. So, in his battle-pieces, first-hand studies had to be made, not only from the quick, but also from the dead. M. Detaille is said to be the only painter who has personally engaged a troop of cavalry to charge pell-mell through a lonely village where he, sketchbook in hand, was a solitary spectator.

The Scarlet Runner.

X.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE JACOBEAN HOUSE.

By C. N. and A. M. Williamson.

THE day after Christopher Race came back to London from his tour with the man of the "Missing Chapter" he found on his table a queer telegram. It said: "Please come at once with your car and try solve mystery at old house now used as hotel patronized by motorists. Same rate paid per day for necessary time as for automobile tour.—Sidney Chester, Wood House, New Forest. References, London and Scottish Bank." And the message was dated two days back.

Christopher did not see why he should be applied to as a solver of mysteries. However, the telegram sounded interesting. He liked old houses, and his desire to accept the offer was whetted by the fact that it had been made several days ago, and might have been passed on to someone else by this time.

At all events, he thought he would answer the wire, and he did so before washing away the dust of travel which he had accumulated at the rate of thirty miles an hour.

"Just back from journey. Found telegram," he wired. "Am I still wanted? If so, can come."

When an answer arrived he had Scarlet Runner ready for another start.

"Yes, urgently wanted," ran the reply. "Hope you can start this afternoon. But don't come to Wood House. Will meet you at the Sandboy and Owl, within mile of Ringhurst as you come from London. Please let me know probable hour of arrival. —Chester."

Christopher wired again, "Hope to reach you about seven." And his hope was justified, as it usually was when he had to depend upon Scarlet Runner. He had often passed the Sandboy and Owl, and remembered the roadside inn for its picturesqueness, so that he lost no time in finding the way.

"I have come to see a Mr. Chester, who will be here in ten or fifteen minutes," Race said to the landlord, who looked as if he might have had a meritorious past as a coachman in some aristocratic household.

The sporting eye of the old man suddenly twinkled. "I think, sir," he answered, "that the person you expect has arrived, and is waiting in my private parlour, which I have given up for the—for the purpose."

The landlord's manner and slight hesitation, as if in search of the right word, struck Christopher as odd; but it was too late to catechize the old man in regard to Mr. Chester, no matter how diplomatically.

The dusk of autumn draped the oak-beamed hall with shadow, and one lamp only made darkness seem more visible. The landlord opened a door at the end of a dim corridor, and said respectfully to someone out of sight, "The gentleman with the motor has arrived." Then he backed out of the way, and Christopher stepped over the threshold. He saw a girl rise up from a chair, crumpling a telegram which she had been reading by the light of a shaded lamp.

She wore a riding habit, and a neat hat on sleek hair the colour of ripening wheat. She was charmingly pretty, in a flowerlike way. Her great eyes, which now appeared black, would be blue by daylight, and her figure was perfect in the well-cut habit; but she was either pale and anxious-looking, or else the lamplight gave that effect.

"I beg your pardon," exclaimed Christopher. "I've come from London to see a Mr. Sidney Chester, and was told I should find him here, but——"

"I'm Sidney Chester," said the girl. "It was I who telegraphed for you to come and help us."

Christopher was surprised, but he kept his countenance, and pretended to take this revelation as a matter of course.

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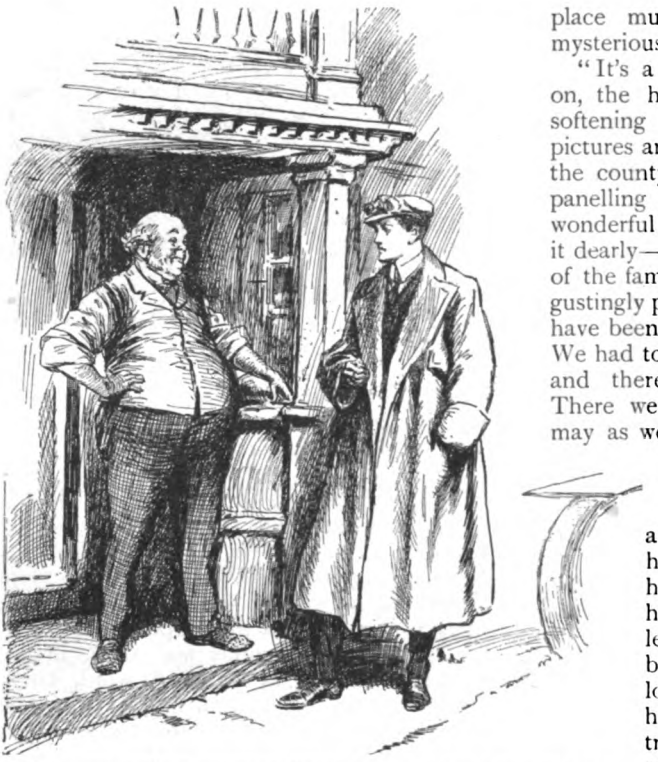


"'I THINK, SIR,' HE ANSWERED, 'THAT THE PERSON YOU EXPECT HAS ARRIVED.'"

"Sidney is a woman's name as well as a man's," she went on, "and there was no use explaining in a telegram. Please sit down, and I'll—no, I can't promise to make you understand, for the thing's beyond understanding; but I'll tell you about it. First, though, I'd better explain why I sent for you. I don't mean to flatter you, but if there's any chance of the mystery being solved, it can only be done by a man of your sort—clever and quick of resource, as well as an accomplished motorist. That's my reason; now for my story. But perhaps you've heard of Wood House and the strange happenings there? We've tried to keep the talk out of the papers, but it was impossible; and there've been paragraphs in most of them for the last fortnight."

"I've been touring for a fortnight," replied Christopher, "and hav'n't paid much attention to the papers."

"I'm glad," answered the girl, "because you'll listen to what I have to tell you with an unbiased mind. You don't even know about Wood House itself?"

Christopher had to admit ignorance, though he guessed from the girl's tone that the place must be famous, apart from its mysterious reputation.

"It's a beautiful old house," she went on, the harassed expression of her face softening into tenderness. "There are pictures and accounts of it in books about the county. We've got the loveliest oak panelling in nearly all the rooms, and wonderful furniture. Of course, we love it dearly—my mother and I, the only ones of the family who are left—but we're disgustingly poor; our branch of the Chesters have been growing poorer for generations. We had to see everything going to pieces, and there was no money for repairs. There were other troubles, too—oh, I may as well tell you, since you ought to know everything concerning us if you're to do any good. I was silly enough to fall in love with a man who ought to marry an heiress, for he's poor, too, and has a title, which makes poverty harder and more grinding. He's let his house—a show place—and because he won't give me up and look for a rich girl (he wouldn't have to look far or long), he's trying to get a fortune out of a ranch in Colorado. That made me feel as if I *must* do something, and we couldn't let Wood House, because there's a clause in father's will against our doing so. We're obliged to live there, or forfeit it to the person who would have inherited it if the place had been entailed and had had to go to a male heir.

"But no such thought came to poor father as that mother and I would dream of making the house into an hotel, so it didn't occur to him to provide against such a contingency. It was I who had the idea—because I was desperate for money; and I heard how people like old houses in these days—Americans and others who aren't used to things that are antique. At last I summoned up courage to propose to mother that we should advertise to entertain motorists and other travellers.

"Every penny we could spare, and a lot we couldn't, we spent on advertising, when she'd consented, and two months ago we opened the house as an hotel. Our old servants were good about helping, and we got in several new ones. We began to make the most astonishing success, and I was delighted. I thought if all went on well I need have nothing to do with managing the place after

this year. I might marry if I liked, and there would be the income rolling in; so you see, after these dreams, what it is to find ruin staring us in the face. That sounds melodramatic, but it's the truth."

"The truth often is melodramatic," said Christopher. "I've discovered that lately. Things happen in real life that would be sneered at by the critics as preposterous."

"This thing that is happening to us is preposterous," said Miss Chester. "People come to our house, perhaps for dinner or lunch, or perhaps for several days. But which ever it may be, during one of the meals—always the last if they're having more than one—every piece of jewellery they may be wearing, and all the money in their pockets and purses—except small silver and copper—disappear mysteriously."

"Perhaps not mysteriously," suggested Christopher. "You mentioned having engaged new servants. One of them may be an expert thief."

"Of course, that was our first idea," said the girl. "But it would be impossible for the most expert thief, even a conjurer, to pull ladies' rings from their fingers, unfasten clasps of pearl dog-collars, take off brooches and bracelets or belts with gold buckles, and remove studs from shirt-fronts or sleeve-links from cuffs, without the knowledge of the persons wearing the things."

"Yes, that would be impossible," Christopher admitted.

"Well, that is what happens at Wood House every day, and has been happening for the last fortnight. People sit at the table, and apparently everything goes on in the most orderly way; yet at the end of the meal their valuables are gone."

"It sounds like a fairy story," said Christopher.

"Or a ghost story," amended Sidney Chester.

Christopher did not smile, for the girl's childish face looked so distressed that to make light of what was tragedy to her would have been cruel. The ghost theory, however, he was not ready to entertain.

"I think the explanation will turn out to be more prosaic," he said. "It would be difficult for ghosts to make jewellery and money invisible as well as themselves."

"Yes," replied Miss Chester, seriously.

"So we must turn our attention elsewhere."

"Ah, but where?"

"I suppose that's what you want me to find out?"

"Exactly. And I wouldn't let you come to Wood House until I'd told you the story. Whatever It is that works the mischief there mustn't know that you are different from any other tourist. You're prepared now. I want you to watch, to set your wits to work to find out the mystery. Of course, you must leave your valuables in care of the landlord here. You'll motor over this evening, won't you, and say you wish to have a room?"

"With pleasure," said Christopher. "And I'll do my best to help."

"Thanks for taking an interest. Then I'll go now. I shall just be able to ride home in time for dinner."

"But there are questions still which I'd better ask you," said Christopher; "as we're not to have any private communication at Wood House. How many indoor servants have you?"

"Three housemaids, one dear old thing who has been with us for years, and two young girls lately got in—one from London, one from our own neighbourhood; a butler we've had since I can remember, two new footmen from London, and an old cook-housekeeper, who has had two assistants since we opened as an hotel. That's all, except a stray creature or two about the kitchen. I must tell you, too, that with the new servants we had the best of references. They've been with us for two months now, and the mystery only began, as I said, a fortnight ago. The first thing that happened was when a rich American family, doing a motor tour round England, came to stop for a night, and were so delighted with the place that they made up their minds to stay from Saturday to Monday. On Sunday night at dinner the two girls and their mother lost jewellery worth thousands, and Mr. Van Rensalaer, the father, was robbed of five hundred pounds in notes—all he had with him except his letter of credit, which wasn't taken. You can imagine how they felt—and how we felt. Of course, we sent for a detective, but he could discover nothing. He said it was the queerest affair he ever heard of. Not a jewel, not a penny has ever been recovered; and at least twenty people who have come to us since have suffered in the same way."

"Still, they come. You haven't lost your clients?" said Christopher.

"Not yet; for though most of those who arrive have read about the mystery in the papers (if they haven't, we feel obliged to warn them) they don't believe the stories. They think the thing must have been planned to work up a sensation, and they're so certain

nothing of the sort can happen to *them* that they won't take the precaution of leaving their jewellery and money somewhere else before coming into the house. Then they lose everything, and are aghast. But it's too late for regrets. Nothing that has disappeared at Wood House has ever been traced."

"Have you lost no valuables yourselves?" asked Christopher—"you and your mother?"

"No, we have none to lose, in the way of jewellery," answered the girl. "As for the money that comes in, we bank everything immediately, and pay for all we buy with cheques. The servants haven't been robbed, and none of our old silver has been taken. But our cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Morley Chester, who have come to stay with us and manage the house—mother and I are too unbusinesslike to do that ourselves—have lost their jewellery, and a little money. Luckily they hadn't many valuables with them, but there were a few heirlooms. We felt dreadfully about their loss, for they're no richer than we are; but they're dears—young, and gay, and kind-hearted—and they pretend not to mind. I don't know what we should have done without them. The servants, too; not one has left us, though with such a cloud of mystery hanging over the place we couldn't have blamed them if they'd walked out in a body, even those who've been with us for years. Oh, it's been so horrid in the house for this dreadful fortnight! Men coming from newspapers wanting to interview us and take photographs of the rooms where the things disappeared. It's a wonder you've never read about us and our troubles."

Christopher replied that it did seem odd, but that he found little time when touring to do more than glance at the summary of news in the papers. He did not add that he had been too much interested in the affairs of his last clients to think about outside matters; but went on to inquire whether he had understood aright—that the vanishing of jewels and money had invariably taken place in certain rooms.

"'HAVE YOU LOST NO VALUABLES YOURSELVES?' ASKED CHRISTOPHER—'YOU AND YOUR MOTHER?'"

"Always at meals, and, therefore, it could happen only in three rooms," said Sidney Chester; "the big dining-hall and two small rooms which we've set apart as private sitting-rooms. Sometimes those who stay with us like to eat there, if they come in parties of three or four; but the dining-hall is the most beautiful room in the house, and people admire it so much that they often prefer it to any other place."

"Extraordinary!" exclaimed Christopher. "You mean to tell me that sometimes you have a number of persons, many of them strangers to each other, lunching or dining at the same time, and that all are robbed without suspecting anything is wrong at the time?"

"Stranger still, there are some who have no valuables and are not touched by the mysterious influence, whatever it may be, yet they don't know what is happening to the others."

"Nobody is robbed in the night?"

"No. Nothing has been missed from the bedrooms."

"Do most of your clients stop for a long time?"

"Most of them only for a day or two, in passing through the New Forest. I don't suppose that any of those who have had

things stolen will come back, though they're enchanted with the house at first, before the Thing happens. Just now we're getting crowds who come to try and ferret out the mystery, or because they've made bets that *they* won't lose anything. But soon the sort of people we want will stop away, and we shall get only vulgar curiosity-mongers; then, when we cease to be a nine days' wonder, there'll be nobody, and we shall have to give up. That's what I look forward to, and it will break my heart."

"Something will have to be done," said Christopher—puzzled, but anxious to be encouraging. "Have you no guest who has been with you several weeks?"

"One," the girl returned, half reluctantly, as if she guessed his reason for putting this question. "It's—a man."

"A young man?"

"Yes, a young man."

"How long has he been in the house?"

"Several weeks. He's painting a picture, using the King's room, as we call it, for a background—the room Charles II. had when an ancestor of ours was hiding him, and would dart down into a secret place underneath whenever a dangerous visitor arrived."

"Oh, an artist?"

"Not a professional. He ——"

"Can't you remember how long he has been with you?"

"Between three weeks and a fortnight." The girl blushed, her white face lovely in its sudden flush of colour. "I see what's in your mind. But there's nothing in that, I assure you. The merest coincidence. You don't look as if you were ready to believe me, but you will when I tell you that it's Sir Walter Raven, the man I'm engaged to marry. When I wrote him about our scheme he didn't like the idea, but soon I let him know what a success it was proving. I even hinted that I might think over the resolution I'd made not to marry him for years, because, after all, I mightn't have to be a burden. He was so excited over the letter that he left his ranch in charge of his partner and came over at once. It was a great surprise to see him, but—it was a very agreeable one. He's been my one comfort—except, of course, our dear cousins—since the evil days began."

"He hasn't been able to throw any light on the problem?"

"No, though he's tried in every way."

"Does he know you've sent for me?"

"I haven't told him, because it would seem as if I couldn't trust him to get to the bottom of the mystery. You see, though he's tremendously clever, he isn't that sort of man. He's been in the Army, and used to drift along, amusing himself as he could, until he met me, and decided to go to work. He's different from you."

"Not so different as she thinks," Christopher said to himself; only he had been driven from amusement to work by a reason less romantic, and, unlike Sir Walter Raven, had not met the right woman yet, but he expected to find her some day.

"When you've got hold of a clue, as I feel you will," Sidney Chester went on," then I'll tell Sir Walter, and he'll be delighted. Till then, though, you shall be for him, as for everybody else except myself, a guest in the house, like other guests. Luckily, we can give you a place to keep that famous car of yours. We've had part of the stables made into a garage. Now, have you asked me everything?"

"Not yet," answered Christopher, selfishly less sorry to detain her than he would have been had she been middle-aged and plain. "I want to know what servants are in the rooms where these robberies occur?"

"The butler, Nelson, in the dining-hall, or one of the footmen if the meal is being served in a private sitting-room."

"Only those, except the guests?"

"Since the mystery began I've sometimes been there to watch and superintend, and one of my cousins, either Morley or his wife. And in the dining-hall Sir Walter Raven is kind enough to keep an eye on what goes on, while appearing to be engaged with his luncheon or dinner."

"Yet the robberies take place just the same under your very eyes?"

"Yes. That is the mysterious part. The whole thing is like a dream. But you will see for yourself. Only, as I said, take care not to have anything about you which They—whoever, whatever They are—can steal."

"I don't think I shall trouble to put away my valuables," said Christopher. "It wouldn't break me if I lost them, and I can't feel that such a thing will happen to me."

"Ah, others have felt that, and regretted their confidence."

"I sha'n't regret mine," laughed the young man. "And I never carry much money."

"Remember, I've warned you!" cried the girl.

"My blood be on my own head," he smiled, in return, and at last announced that the catechism was finished. She gave him her hand, and he shook it reassuringly; then, it being understood that, as it was

late, he would dine at the inn and arrive at Wood House after nine, she left him. Five minutes later, standing at the window, he saw her ride off on a fine hunter.

As he ate chops and drank a glass of ale

"STANDING AT THE WINDOW, HE SAW HER RIDE OFF ON A FINE HUNTER."

Christopher considered what he had heard of the mystery, and did not know what to think of it.

He could not believe that things happened as Miss Chester described. He thought that a sensitive imagination, rendered more vivid by singular events, must have led her into exaggeration. However, he was keenly interested, and the fact that Sir Walter Raven had been in the house since the strange happenings began added to the piquancy of the situation. He admired the girl so much that he would regret disillusionment for her; yet her *fiancé's* presence for precisely that length of time was an odd coincidence. He might be anxious to force her to abandon the scheme which he appeared to approve, and—he might have hit upon a peculiar way of doing it. How he could have gone about accomplishing such an object in such a manner Christopher could not see; yet his attention focused on Sir Walter Raven as a central figure in the mystery.

The road from the Sandboy and Owl, through Ringhurst and on to Wood House, was beautiful. Christopher had passed over it before, and, coming to the gateway and lodge of the place he sought, he remembered having remarked both, though he had not then known the name of the estate.

He steered Scarlet Runner between tall stone gate-posts topped with stone lions supporting shields, acknowledged a salutation from an elderly man at the door of the old black and white lodge, and drove up a winding avenue under beeches and oaks.

Suddenly, rounding a turn, he came in sight of the house, standing in the midst of a lawn cleared of trees, in a forest-like park.

It was a long, low building of irregular shape, the many windows with tiny lozenge-panes brightly-lit behind their curtains. In the moonlight the projecting upper storeys with gabled roofs and ivy-draped chimneys, the walls chequered in black and white, with wondrous diapering of trefoils, quatrefoils, and chevrons, were clearly defined against a wooded background. The house could have few peers in picturesqueness if one searched all England. Christopher was not surprised that the plan of turning it into an hotel had attracted many motorists and other tourists.

He was received by a mild, old, white-haired butler, and a footman in neat livery was sent to show him the way to the garage. Scarlet Runner disposed of for the night, he returned to the house and entered a square hall, where a fire of logs in a huge fireplace sent red lights flickering over the carved ceiling, the fine antique cabinets stored with rare china, the gate-legged tables, and high-backed chairs.

His name was announced as if he had been an invited guest arriving at a country house, and from a group near the fireplace came forward to welcome him a young man with a delightful face. Glancing past him for an instant, as he advanced, Christopher saw Sidney Chester in evening dress; a dainty old lady whom he took to be her mother; a rather timid-looking little woman,

whose pretty features seemed almost plain in contrast with Miss Chester's; a handsome, darkly sunburnt young man, with a soldierly, somewhat arrogant air; also seven or eight strangers, divided into different parties scattered about the hall.

"How do you do? Is it possible we're to have the pleasure of entertaining the famous Mr. Race?" said the young man who came to greet Christopher. "My name is Morley Chester, and I play host for my cousins, Mrs. Chester and her daughter."

Christopher disclaimed the adjective bestowed upon him, but admitted that he was the person who had had a certain adventure in Dalvania, and one or two others that had somehow got into the papers. Then Mr. Chester introduced him to the two cousins, mother and daughter (he meeting the girl as if for the first time), to the pretty, quiet young woman who was, it appeared, Mrs. Morley Chester, and added an informal word or two which made Sir Walter Raven and Mr. Christopher Race known to each other.

Sidney Chester's *fiancé* was, after all, very pleasant and frank in manner, his haughty air being the effect, perhaps, of a kind of proud reserve. Christopher could not help feeling slightly drawn to the young man, as he usually was to handsome people; but there was no doubt in his mind that Mr. Morley Chester was an agreeable person. He was not fine-looking, but his way of speaking was so individual and engaging that Christopher did not wonder at Miss Chester for referring to him as her dear cousin.

Assuredly he was the right man for this trying position. His tact and graciousness must put the shyest stranger at ease, and he struck the happy mean between the professional and amateur host, necessary in a country house where paying guests were taken.

He went with Christopher to show two or three rooms which were free, and the new arrival having selected one, and settled about the price, Morley Chester said, half laughingly, half ruefully, "I suppose you've heard about our mystery?"

Christopher confessed that rumours had reached him.

"We think it right to warn everyone who comes," said his host. "Not that our warnings have much effect. People think nothing will happen to *them*—that *they* won't be caught napping; or it amuses them to lose their things, as one gives up one's watch or rings to a conjurer to see what he will do. At worst, though, you're safe for some time.

"The ghostly thief—as we've begun to believe him—lets our visitors alone until just before they're leaving. He always seems to know their intentions. It's a new way of 'speeding the parting guest.' But, if I make light of our troubles, we feel them seriously enough in reality."

Christopher was offered supper, but refused, as he had lately dined; and he did not go downstairs again until after the ladies had gone to bed. Then he joined the men in the smoking-room, and observed with veiled interest not only the guests, but the servants who brought in whisky and soda. There was not a face of which he could say to himself that the expression was sly or repellent.

Before Mr. Chester and Sir Walter Raven no one mentioned the trouble in the house; but next morning, sitting in the hall which was the favourite gathering-place, he caught scraps of gossip. No one present had yet been robbed, but everyone had heard something queer from others who had left the place, and as a rich brewer, lately knighted, intended to go away in his motor after luncheon that day, he was being chaffed by his acquaintances.

"I suppose you'll give your watch and money to your chauffeur before you sit down for the last meal?" laughed an American girl who had arrived some days before in her motor-car.

"No, I sha'n't," replied Sir Henry Smithson, valiantly. "I don't believe in this nonsense. I'll show you what I have got on me, and as I am now so shall I be when I go into the dining-hall."

With this he displayed a gorgeous repeater, with his monogram and crest in brilliants; indicated a black pearl scarf-pin, turned a sapphire and diamond ring set in aluminium on a fat finger, and jingled a store of coins in his pocket, which he announced to be gold, amounting to fifty pounds. "I've a few notes, too," said he, "and I expect to have them just the same when I finish my lunch as when I go in."

"Well, we shall all lunch at the same time, and watch," remarked the American girl.

The paying guests at Wood House either breakfasted in their own rooms or in a cheerful morning room, more modern than most parts of the quaint old house; therefore, Christopher Race had not seen the dining-hall of which Miss Chester had spoken. He did not join in the conversation with the brewer; nevertheless, when he saw that gentleman swaggering to luncheon, he followed at a distance, everybody else moving in the same direction at the same time.

"'WE SHALL ALL LUNCH AT THE SAME TIME, AND WATCH,' REMARKED THE GIRL."

It was, indeed, a beautiful room, this dining-hall which Sidney Chester had praised. It was wainscoted to the ceiling in old oak carved in the exquisite linen fold pattern, and though it was worm-eaten and showed signs of excessive age, Christopher, who called himself a judge of antiquities, thought the panelling would be almost worth its weight in gold.

The tables for guests were arranged somewhat oddly, probably, Christopher supposed, with a view to showing off the room and its furniture to advantage. The tables were small, of a size to accommodate parties of from two to eight persons, and ranged along two sides of the dining-hall, placed against one of the walls. In the middle of the room stood a huge old refectory table, with carved sides and legs, and leaves to draw out, a splendid specimen of the Tudor period; but no plates were laid upon this. It was used as a serving table; and against the wall on the right of the door, as one entered from the great hall, was a magnificent oak sideboard, loaded with handsome pieces of ancient silver.

Christopher had a table to himself at the end of the long room, and Sir Henry Smithson sat at a larger one not far away. He had invited the American girl, her chaperon, and Sir Walter Raven to share with him his farewell meal, and much champagne flowed. There was a good deal of talk and laughter at that and other tables, but the luncheon was served by the butler and two footmen in ceremonious style, Mr. Morley Chester unostentatiously superintending behind a screen which hid the door used by the servants. Not one of the three ladies of the Chester family was in the room.

All went on in the most orderly manner, and the food was good, as well as nicely served, though it struck Christopher that it was rather long between courses. He ate with good appetite until the meal was drawing to an end, when he began to realize that he was tired, and would be glad to get into the garden and smoke a cigarette. He liked the smell of the old oak which came to him from the panelled wall, yet he thought that the fresh air would be pleasant.

Suddenly, as Christopher was beginning upon biscuits and cheese, Sir Henry Smithson sprang up in his chair, exclaiming, "By Jove!"

Then came a clatter of voices at his table, both ladies there crying out in consternation.

"What has happened?" asked Morley Chester, coming out from behind the screen, while Sir Walter Raven sat looking pale and concerned, and the mild-faced butler saved himself from dropping a bottle of port.

"Everything has gone!" ejaculated Miss Reese, the American. "His watch and chain—his ring—his scarf-pin—and——"

"And my money," finished Sir Henry Smithson.

"I'm dreadfully sorry," stammered Mr. Chester. "I begged you to be careful."

"Oh, I've got myself to blame, I suppose," broke in the brewer. He gave a rough laugh, but it did not sound genuine. "Who on earth would have thought such things could be? Well, seeing's believing. This is the queerest house I was ever in. It's bewitched."

"So we are beginning to think," said Chester, deeply mortified. "I can't begin to express my regret——"

"My own fault," said Sir Henry. "I'll

say no more about it—for the present. But I wouldn't be sorry to see that repeater of mine again. If you don't mind I'll send a detective down on this business."

Chester assured him that he would like nothing better, and that he only hoped the detective might be more successful than others they had already had at their own expense. People left their tables and crowded round Sir Henry, who was, indeed, shorn of the jewellery he had displayed before luncheon. No one seemed to doubt his word that it had disappeared during the meal without his knowledge, but Christopher made a

"SIR HENRY SMITHSON SPRANG UP IN HIS CHAIR, EXCLAIMING, 'BY JOVE!'"

mental note to write up to town for information concerning the brewer's character. He was a responsible man by reputation, but he might have eccentricities. He might wish to draw attention to himself by pretending to be a victim of the mystery.

Presently, after the dining-hall had been searched in vain for trace of the lost treasures, Sir Henry Smithson went off in his motor, a sadder and a wiser man.

After this, whenever any guest was about to leave the house, history repeated itself, except in one or two instances where precaution had been considered the better part of valour, and no jewellery or money brought into the dining-hall for the last meal.

Meanwhile Christopher had had a look into the two private sitting-rooms, which were separated from the dining-hall only by one long, narrow room used of late as a kind of office. He even ordered dinner in one of them, but nothing happened during the meal.

"I believe people do it themselves when nobody is looking," Christopher thought that night, meditating in his own room. "Can it be that there is some supernatural influence in this old house which puts people into an hysterical state, hypnotizes them, so to speak, and makes them do abnormal things?"

Certain it was that he had grown nervous and, as he expressed it, "jumpy." He suffered from headache, an ailment he had scarcely known before; slept fitfully, starting awake, often with the fancy that he heard a sound in his bedroom. When he dreamed, it was always of old oak and the smell of oak. He felt dull and disinclined to think for long on any subject. In the mornings when he got up there were lines under his eyes, and he had little appetite. Either he imagined it, or the Morley Chesters and their cousin Sidney also looked ill. Perhaps this was not surprising, as the mystery in the house caused them constant anxiety, but Sir Walter Raven was losing his sunburnt tint, and it seemed to Christopher more or less the same with the butler and footman, and all the guests who remained longer than three or four days at Wood House. He was the last man to dwell on ghostly fancies, yet after he remained for a week at the place without being able to earn a penny of the money Miss Chester had offered, he was half ready to credit the idea that the house was haunted.

"If anybody had been doing conjuring tricks I should have had the wit to discover it by this time," he reflected. But if there was anything material to discover, professionals were no more successful than the amateur. There was a new footman in the dining-room, and Morley Chester whispered to Christopher one day that he was a detective in the employ of Sir Henry Smithson.

Race had almost abandoned his suspicions of Sir Walter Raven, whom he liked more and more, when, on his eighth night at Wood House, a sound startled him from a dream of linen fold patterned panelling. Usually, when he waked thus, it was to find all silent,

and he would turn over and fall asleep once more, telling himself that the noise had been part of his dream. But this time it continued. There was a queer creaking behind the wainscot.

Of course, it might be rats. Rats could make any sort of sound in the night; and yet he did not think that rats had made this sound. It was too like a foot treading on a loose board, and then stepping on it a second time.

Christopher struck a match and looked at his watch. It was two o'clock. He determined to stop awake the next night and listen for the same thing again. He did so; and it came, at almost exactly the same hour. That day, and the day before, a mysterious disappearance of jewellery had taken place.

In the morning Christopher asked the servant who brought his morning tea who occupied the adjoining room. "Sir Walter Raven," was the answer. Race was angry with himself for not having learned earlier who his neighbour was; but during the day, as he passed, and saw the door of the next room ajar, he glanced in. It seemed to him that there was an inexplicable distance between this door and his. The rooms were supposed to adjoin each other. His own door was near the dividing wall, and so was Sir Walter's, yet there was a wide space between.

Through the open door of Sir Walter Raven's room he could see a low window, with a cushioned seat in the embrasure. In his room there was one of the same size and shape. To prevent mistake he propped a book against the lozenge-panes of his own window, and went out to walk round the rambling house and reconnoitre.

"HE WENT OUT TO WALK ROUND THE RAMBLING HOUSE AND RECONNOITRE."

Yes, there was the book; and there was Sir Walter's window farther on towards the left. But there was something between which did not puzzle Christopher as much as it would had he not noticed the distance separating the doors of the two adjoining rooms. Half-way between the two low windows was a tiny one, so overgrown with ivy that it was all but invisible, even to an observant eye.

"Sir Walter Raven must have a cupboard in his wall, lit by that little window," Christopher decided, "or else there's a secret 'hidie hole' between his room and mine."

As Sir Walter's door stood open, Christopher could peer into the room, by pausing as he passed through the corridor, and discover for himself whether there was a cupboard door in the wall. If anyone saw him looking in, it would be simple to explain that he had absent-mindedly mistaken the room for his own, farther on. But he was not seen and had plenty of time, lingering on the threshold, to make certain that no cupboard door was visible in the oak wainscot of the wall. If there were a door it was a secret one.

Christopher was sure now that some place of concealment existed between his room and Sir Walter Raven's, and he was sure, too, that someone entered there at night. What was that someone's errand, and had it any connection with the mystery? This was a question which Christopher considered it his business to find out as soon as possible.

To begin with, he tapped the wainscoting in his own room, and was interested to discover that his knock gave out a hollow sound.

He believed that there was but the one thickness of oak between him and the secret, whatever it might be, which lay beyond.

The panelling here was simple, without any elaboration of carving. The wainscot, which reached from floor to ceiling, was divided into large squares framed in a kind of fluting. Having examined each of these squares on the wall nearest Sir Walter Raven's he gave up the hope that there was any hidden door or sliding panel.

"I could saw out a square, though," he thought, "and look at what's on the other side; or I could squeeze through if it seemed worth while. A panel behind the curtain of my bed would do; and I could stick it in again, so that if anybody suspected there was something up they would hardly be able to see what I'd been doing."

Apparently no one ever entered the hiding-place except in the night, about two o'clock. The noises behind the wainscoting continued for a few minutes only, and after that all was silence.

In the afternoon Christopher motored into Ringhurst to buy a small saw, and a bull's-eye lantern such as policemen use. On the way back he overtook Sir Walter with Sidney, and they accepted his offer to give them a lift back to Wood House. "Queer thing, I'm used to tramping about the whole day, and don't turn a hair after a twenty-five-mile walk; but lately I feel done up after eight," said the young man, who was looking pale and heavy-eyed. "I suppose it must be that the climate's relaxing."

Christopher was pricked with a guilty pang. He was engaged by Miss Chester to act as a detective, and yet he felt ashamed of suspecting and plotting against the man she loved. He liked Raven, too. Altogether, keen as he was to fathom the mystery, he wished that he had never come to Wood House.

They talked about the robberies as Christopher drove the car home, Sidney sitting beside him, Sir Walter leaning forward in the tonneau. "After all, it will end in our going away from the dear old place," sighed Sidney, with tears in her eyes. "The strain is wearing mother out; and, you know, if neither of us continues living in the house it will go, as I told you, to the man who would have been the heir had the entail not been broken."

"You'll both come out with me to Colorado and forget your troubles. Let the chap have the place, and be thankful it's off your hands," said Raven.

He spoke with the sincerity of a lover, not like a schemer who would force a woman to his will by foul means if fair ones proved not strong enough.

"I feel a beast spying on him and working against him," thought Christopher. "Suppose he knows nothing about the secret place next his room? Suppose the noises are made by rats? And what if, after all, the people who think they have been robbed never have been robbed? I'll give Raven the benefit of the doubt until I've tried one more experiment."

Tea was going on in the hall when Scarlet Runner arrived at Wood House. There were letters for Christopher, and he announced in the hearing of everyone, including the servants, that unless he should get a telegram advising him to the contrary he must leave Wood House, where he had spent such an enjoyable fortnight, immediately after breakfast the next morning.

"You'll not come back to us?" asked Sidney, with veiled meaning in her voice.

Christopher pretended not to notice the meaning. "I'm sorry to say I sha'n't be able to," he answered. "Already I've been here longer than I expected."

He did not mean to take any money from the girl, but though she could not be aware of this resolution, she seemed really sorry to have him go, failure as he had been—thus far.

Christopher took longer over dressing for dinner that night than usual. He hesitated whether to wear the studs and sleeve-links he liked best, or others which he did not care about. Also he was half minded to lock his watch up in his suit-case. Finally, however, he resolved to make his experiment bravely. "I'm not hysterical," he said to himself, "though I might get to be if I stopped here much longer. *I* sha'n't steal my own things and hide them, if that's what other people do."

Throughout his stay at Wood House he had taken his meals at the same small table, except once or twice when he had been asked to join new-made acquaintances for dinner. But to-night he invited Sir Walter Raven to dine with him, "as it was his last evening." The young man accepted, and they talked of Colorado. Sir Walter was inviting him to come out to his ranch some day, when suddenly the expression of the once healthy, sunburnt, now slightly haggard face changed.

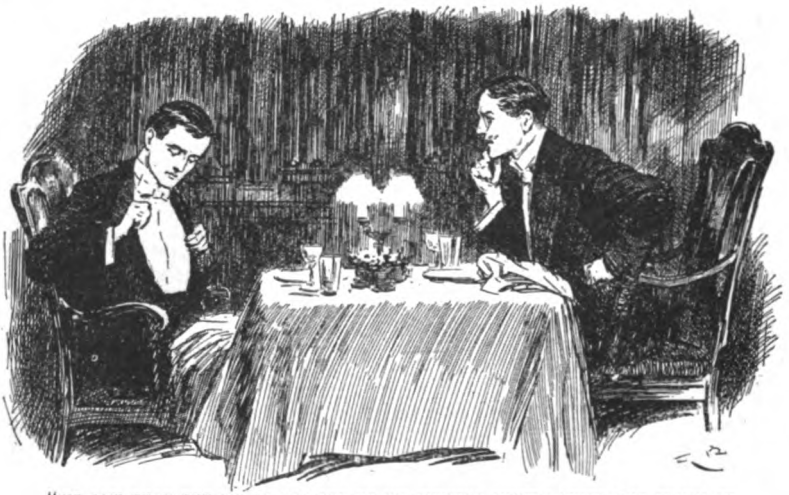
"By Jove!" exclaimed Raven, the blood mounting to his forehead.

"What's the matter?" asked Christopher.

"I'm not a particularly observant chap, but I suppose I would have noticed if you'd come in without your shirt-studs. You didn't by any chance forget to put them in, did you?"

"No; I had them in, right enough," said Race. Looking down he saw that the white expanse of his evening shirt lacked the finish of the two pearl studs he had worn when he came into the room. His cuffs hung loose, empty of his favourite pair of links. Hastily touching his watch-pocket, he found it limp and flat.

"Well, yes, it *is* 'by Jove,'" he remarked, grimly.



"HE SAW THAT THE WHITE EXPANSE OF HIS EVENING SHIRT LACKED THE FINISH OF THE TWO PEARL STUDS."

"Shall we call Morley Chester and tell him what's happened?" asked Raven.

"No," said Christopher, who sat with his back turned towards the other occupants of the room, his table being at the end by a window, and he having given his usual seat to his guest; "I'd rather not make a fuss. I shall sit till the others have gone, and no one will be the wiser. I'm sick of sensations, and don't want to pose as the hero of one if I can help it."

"Some people seem to like it," said Raven.

"So I've thought," replied Christopher. But his theory was upset. He could not believe in any ghostly influence strong enough to impose illusions upon his mind. A queer thrill went through him. He was struck with horror by the mystery, which had never impressed itself so vividly upon him before.

It was a relief when the rest of the diners left the room, and he was free to slip away without making statements or answering questions. Luckily for him—if unluckily for the Chesters—there were few guests in the house. Those who were there—with the exception of Sir Walter Raven—were new arrivals, and strangers to Christopher. For this reason he escaped the fire of curiosity which raged round most departing visitors at Wood House. He went to his room, locked the door, and, having listened with his ear at the wainscoting, presently began as noiselessly as possible to saw out a selected square from the oak panelling behind his curtained four-poster bed. The saw was sharp, and he worked as energetically as if he had an injury to avenge. In an hour he had the panel ready to come out of its frame. But he did not venture to take it out and commence his explorations until the house was still for the night.

Not once while he worked had there been the faintest sound on the other side. Removing the square of wainscoting at last as if it had been a pane in a window (odd, the oak here hadn't half that strong, subtle fragrance of rich old wood that it had downstairs in the dining-hall and the two private sitting-rooms!), Christopher turned on the light of his lantern and peered into the obscurity on the other side.

There was a hollow space between this wall and the next—a space rather more than two feet wide. Christopher had moved his bed, and cut into a panel so low down that to peer into the opening he had to kneel. The square aperture he had made was so large that by squeezing he could thrust his shoulders through as well as his head. So far as he could see, there was no door on the opposite side, nor was there furniture of any sort in the secret place the stream of light lit up. But at the far corner there was something low and long, and blacker than the darkness. It might be a heavy beam, he thought, against a wall, or it might be a box.

Withdrawing his head, he looked at the quaint grandfather clock which stood in a

corner of his room. It was never right within half an hour, but he had now no watch to consult. According to the old timepiece it wanted twenty minutes to two. Perhaps it was later, perhaps earlier; but, in any case, Christopher had time to make researches before the nightly footfalls were due.

It was difficult to wriggle through the square hole in the wainscoting, but he did it, after ridding himself of coat and waistcoat. Now he stood in a long, narrow space between the walls of his own room and Sir Walter Raven's. He had slipped off his pumps, and in stockinged feet began cautious explorations, the lantern making a pathway of light. The thing he had seen at the far end was not a beam. It was a box—two boxes—three boxes—of common wood, such as come into every household from the stores. They had lids, but the lids were not nailed down. Christopher lifted one. The box was filled with jewellery, heaped up in neat piles, according to its kind, on some dark garment folded underneath. There were a pile of bracelets, a pile of brooches, a pile of rings, and a collection of watches like glittering gold eggs in a nest. The second box had the same description of contents, though there were more miscellaneous articles—gold or jewelled belt-buckles, hat-pins, a diamond dog-collar or two, and several strings of pearls. In the third box, much smaller than the other two, were purses, some of leather, some of gold or silver netting; cigarette-cases with jewelled monograms; and, weighted down by a lump of gold chains, lay a quantity of bank-notes.

The ghost of Wood House did his work in a business-like manner!

Of gold coins there were none. Even the most prudent ghost might venture to put these to use without delay, when a sharp and practised eye had found them not to be marked suspiciously.

"What a haul it has been," Christopher said to himself. His valuables did not appear to have been added to the collection, but he shrewdly suspected that they would be put into place that night. He had only to wait and see who came to put them there; or should he go farther in this adventure first?

Behind the row of wooden boxes was a square hole, black as the heart of night. Christopher's lantern showed him that from the top of this opening descended a narrow staircase, winding round upon itself like a corkscrew. He set his foot on the first step, and it squeaked. Then he knew what it was that had waked him every night—a foot treading upon that stair—perhaps other stairs below.

"I'll see what's at the bottom," thought Christopher; and was in the act of stepping over the low barrier of boxes when he heard a distant sound.

It was faint, yet it made Christopher pause. He withdrew his foot from the top step of the stairway, and, covering the light, lay on his side behind the boxes which would, until a person advancing had risen to a level higher than the wooden lids, form a screen to hide him.

The sound continued, growing gradually more distinct. Someone was tip-toeing towards the stairs. Someone was on the stairs. Someone was coming up. There was a wavering glimmer of light, a little light, like that of a candle.

Christopher lay very still. He hardly even breathed.

The light was moving up the dark wall, and throwing a strange black shadow, which might be the shadow of a head. A stair creaked. Another stair. That clock must have been slow, or else the ghost was before its time. Now there was a long-drawn, tired breath, like a sigh, and in the advancing light gleamed something white and small. For a moment it hung in the midst of shadow, then it descended on the lid of the middle box. It was a woman's hand.

Quick as thought Christopher seized and held it tightly, at the same instant rising up and flashing his lantern.

There was a stifled gasp; the hand struggled vainly; he pulled it towards him, though its owner stumbled and nearly fell, and Christopher found himself face to face with Mrs. Morley Chester.

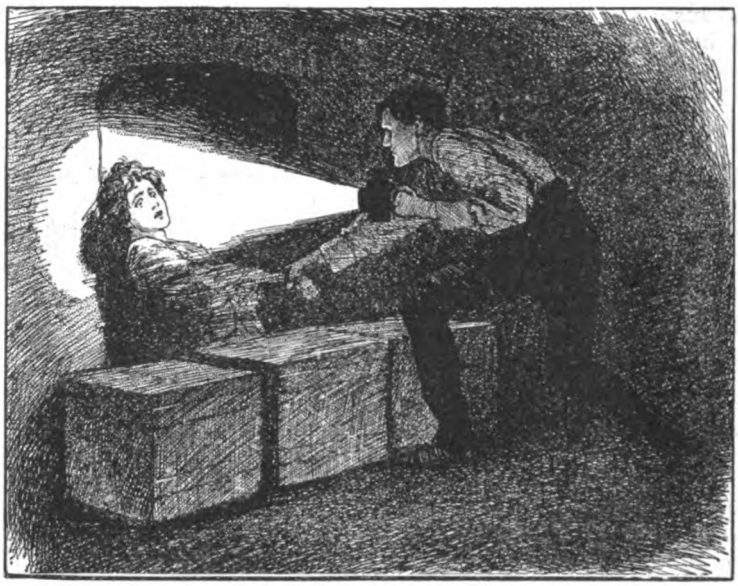
"Let me go!" she panted. "Oh, I implore you!"

"I'll not let you go," said Christopher, in a voice as low as hers, but mercilessly determined. "This game is up. You shall tell me everything, or I swear I'll alarm the house, send for the police, and have you arrested, you and your husband."

"Not my husband!" faltered the "dear little cousin," the pretty, timid creature who had always seemed to Christopher pathetic in her gentle self-effacement, her desire to help Cousin Sidney. "He—he has nothing to do with this. I——"

"Oh, yes, he has; everything to do with it," insisted Christopher, brutally, meaning to frighten her. "You couldn't have managed this yourself. I'm not an ordinary guest. I'm here as a detective, and I've been working up the case for a fortnight. Now, I want your confession. Be quick, please, or you'll regret it."

"How cruel you are!" sobbed the woman.



"HE PULLED HER GENTLY, BUT FIRMLY, UP TO THE TOP OF THE STEPS."

Christopher laughed. "How cruel you have both been to those who trusted you—and to others likely to be suspected in your stead."

"I would do anything for Morley," said Morley's wife.

Still holding her wrist, he pulled her gently, but firmly, up to the top of the steps, and did not loosen his grasp until he stood between her and the stairway.

"If you wish to save him you know what to do," the young man said.

"You won't send us to prison if I tell you the whole story?"

"I'll do my best for you, if you make a clean breast of it; but the contents of these boxes must be restored to their owners, for your cousin's sake if nothing else. I promise to shut my eyes to your escaping with your husband, before any public revelation is made, provided I'm satisfied that you tell me the whole truth now."

"I will, oh, I will! You know, Morley would have had this place if common justice had been done—if the entail hadn't been broken."

"Ah, *he* is the heir of whom Miss Chester spoke!"

"Of course, who else could be? He's the only one left in the male line. And think what it was for him to find out through an expert, whose word he couldn't doubt, that there's coal enough under the park to make him an immensely rich man, if only he hadn't been robbed of his rights."

"He didn't tell Miss Chester of this discovery?"

"Naturally not. If she or her mother gave up living here the estate would come to him after all. He hoped for that. And when he heard of her plan to open a kind of hotel he helped her get a licence and offered to manage the business. That was because he had an idea, which he hoped he could work. His father, who died when Morley was a boy, was a profesor of chemistry, and made some clever inventions and discoveries, but they never brought in money. There was one thing he found after spending a year in Persia for his health. He discovered that out of a plant there—a plant no one had ever thought of importance before—an extract could be produced which would make people unconscious, at the same time causing their muscles to remain so rigid that if they were standing they would remain on their feet, or would not drop what they might be holding in their hands. When they came to themselves again they would not feel ill, would not even know they had lost consciousness for a moment.

"Morley's father was much excited about this preparation and hoped it would be as important as curare, if not chloroform. He named the stuff arenoform, as nearly as possible after the plant, and published his discovery to the medical profession. But then came a dreadful blow. After many experiments to change and improve it, nothing could be done to prolong unconsciousness enough to make arenoform really useful to doctors and surgeons. The effect wouldn't last longer than five or six minutes, and the patients were terribly exhausted next day, so that the stuff would not do even for dentists in extracting teeth, as it was more depressing than gas. One of the most wonderful things about it was that a lot of people could be made unconscious at once, even in a big room, by a spray of arenoform floating in the air. But though that was curious and interesting, it was not of practical use, so arenoform was a failure.

"The disappointment was so great that Morley's father was never the same again. He always hoped that some experiment would make the thing a success, and, instead of gaining the fortune he'd expected, he spent more money than he could spare from his family in importing quantities of the plant from Persia, and manufacturing the extract in his own laboratory. Then he died, and there were hundreds and hundreds of the bottles in the house, of no use to anybody; but Morley had promised his dying father not to let them be destroyed. Everyone forgot the discovery of arenoform, for you see Dr. Chester has been dead twenty years. Only Morley didn't forget; and it was the existence of that quantity of arenoform in the house left him by his father which put the idea of coming here into his head. He experimented with the stuff on a dog, and found it was as powerful as on the day it was made. Then he told me, and I promised to help in any way I could.

"Next to the dining-hall on one side, and separating it from the two rooms used as private sitting-rooms for guests, is a long, rather ugly room which Morley asked Sidney to give him as a private office. Night after night he worked there before the house was opened to the public, and afterwards too, perfecting his scheme. He perforated the walls, so that, by means of a little movable machine which I could work, a spray of arenoform could be showered through the oak wainscoting either into the dining-hall on one side or the two sitting-rooms on the other. Then he had the tables ranged along the wall; and as one peculiarity of arenoform is that it smells like wood—wonderfully like old oak—no detective could have suspected anything by coming to sniff about the place afterwards. Besides, the perforations in the wainscoting are so small that they seem no different from the worm-holes which are slowly spoiling the old oak.

"When Morley was in the dining-hall or one of the sitting-rooms—which ever place we planned to have something happen—I would be in the locked office, and at a signal which he would give me when most of the servants were out of the room waiting to bring in a new course, I would turn on the spray. He always kept at the very farthest end of the room, behind the screen, and put his face to an open window there. Then, when everybody in the room was under the influence, which they were in a minute or two, he would take whatever he wanted from some unconscious man or woman, or even several persons, before anyone woke up. We've had no one to help us except an assistant of the cook, whom I bribed to make it as long between courses as possible. When I was ready to have the servants go in with the next dish I would touch a little electric bell in the office which Morley had arranged to communicate with the kitchen. The cook's assistant knows nothing, though, except that for some reason it was convenient to me not to have the meals hurried, and to be able to regulate exactly the moment when the different courses should go in.

"Of course, the horrid stuff has affected our health—Morley's and mine—as well as that of everybody else who has been near when the machine was worked, or lived in the house for any length of time. But we hoped that Sidney and her mother would soon give up. Then the place would be Morley's, and we would be repaid for everything. While if they held on we should at least have the jewels.

"When Morley was working at the walls he discovered the way into this secret place out of our office—not the only 'hidie hole' in the house—but neither Sidney nor her mother knows of its existence. We thought it would be useful to get things out of the way, for fear of detectives searching our boxes, and so it has been. Morley has always sent me up, because I am so light and small and don't make as much noise on the creaking stairs as a man would. Now you know the whole story. And if you have any sense of justice you'll admit that Morley isn't to blame, when the place should have been his, and not Sidney's or her mother's."

Long before dawn Mr. and Mrs. Morley Chester left Wood House. Next day Christopher told Sidney and Sir Walter Raven the tale as it had been told to him. Also, he mentioned the coal. Also, he showed them the store of jewels and bank-notes.

Where the Morley Chesters went Christopher and others did not know, and did not want to know; but when an advertisement was put into all the most important papers that the mysterious thief at Wood House had been discovered, and that everybody who had lost anything could have it returned by claiming it, the enlightened police were unable to get upon the track of the missing ones.

Christopher would not accept any payment from Sidney Chester. But he would like to have a piece of her wedding-cake to "dream on." He did not think that it would cause him to dream of old oak.

"RANJI" AS A RULER.

By A. C. Maclaren.

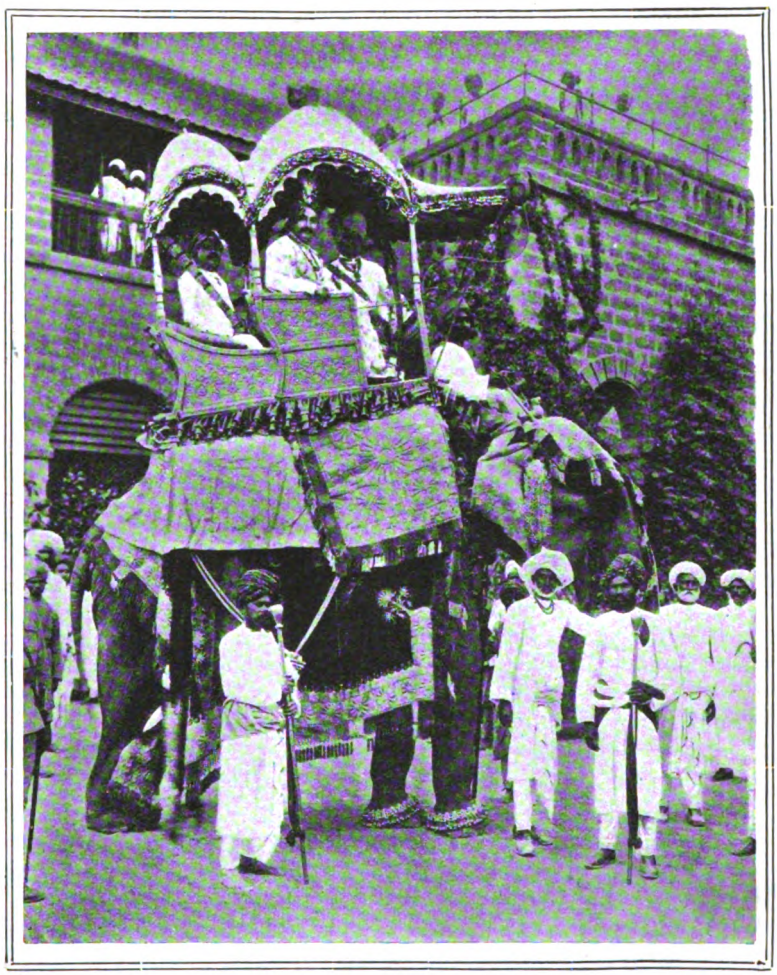
IT is but a short time ago since the news of Prince Ranjitsinhji's succession to the estate of Jamnagar reached us at home; and as to how the good news was received by his many friends and acquaintances in England the two thousand cablegrams of congratulation will testify. It cost the Jam one thousand pounds to reply, and as cables still kept coming in he had to resort to the Press for the purpose of acknowledging his thanks. That he felt very deeply the many messages from friends goes without saying, for it has been my good fortune to hear him talk on the subject, and express his feelings in such a manner that one had to hear him to really grasp the depth of his gratitude to those far away.

Having enjoyed his friendship ever since he left Cambridge, he has talked to me on every subject concerning himself without the slightest reserve; yet, in spite of the disappointment caused by the ruling of the Government when the late Jam was installed, he never bore any ill-will towards anyone concerned, but was content to wait patiently, with the result that he has at last got his deserts.

PRINCE RANJITSINHJI AS THE JAM OF JAMNAGAR.
From a Photograph.

In regard to his becoming ruler of a large estate in India, it is curious that such was predicted when he was but a baby, and that, too, when he had an older brother who is still living. Again, when I was his guest for the greater part of my stay in India two years ago, it was prophesied that he would become the Jam of Jamnagar within twenty-four hours of his actual installation.

I have recently returned from a visit to my old friend in his new position and amid his fresh surroundings, and some account will, I have no doubt, find in this country a large circle of interested readers. Without going too much into details, it must be said that he is now the ruler of a large estate with great possibilities for the future. Jamnagar, or as it is sometimes called Nawanagar, lies in a very healthy part of India, within five miles of the coast, and even in the hottest time of year a cool breeze can always be had when staying in the bungalows on the coast. The Jam is very fond of taking a spin on one of his motors to the sea in the cool of the evening when it has become too dark for tennis, at which game he has lost none of his cunning, for he was the only player to pull me through a set



From a] THE JAM ON HIS STATE ELEPHANT. *[Photograph.*

successfully out of a number of games in which really good players took part. Whilst on the subject of tennis mention should be made of his boys who collect the balls during play, and who are decked out in his own colours in the shape of a green suit with broad light-blue sash round the waist and turban of green, pink, and blue, which give a very pleasing effect. At least three evenings in the week tennis of the keenest will be played for close on two hours, and, without exception, all the young princes who were guests of the Jam Saheb were experts at the game.

These games are a great relief to the Jam Saheb after being busied with affairs of State from twelve to five, during which time he is with his divan and secretaries, and it is during these hours that he receives any bearers of grievances, turning no one away until he has satisfied himself that justice is done to all. On one occasion I counted over fifty natives waiting outside the large guest-house in which he is at present living, all of whom would obtain an audience with their Chief; this will give my readers some idea of how the Jam's time is occupied.

His experience in the past gained during his visits to other chiefs is now standing him in good stead, very little escaping his observant nature. He prefers to do himself what many chiefs leave their subordinates to accomplish, and seeing him as I did, working like a Trojan, day after day, in his new *rôle*, caused me to remember a reply he gave some five years ago, during a cricket match, to a friend who accused him of laziness. "If I had the work to do I would very soon show you I could work as hard as anyone," were the exact words he used, and those who really knew him felt that he was not likely to go back on his words.

There were many things left undone by the late Jam which are now engaging the attention of the present ruler, who has to work very hard to make up for the lost time. The early morning finds the Jam hard at work with his correspondence, which is no inconsiderable item when one notices the size of his letter-bag—in fact, he is unable to take an "easy" until tiffin is served at eleven o'clock, and afterwards he is engaged as previously mentioned until five or five-thirty, when he will drive out to the polo games,

which are arranged for his guests when tennis is given a rest.

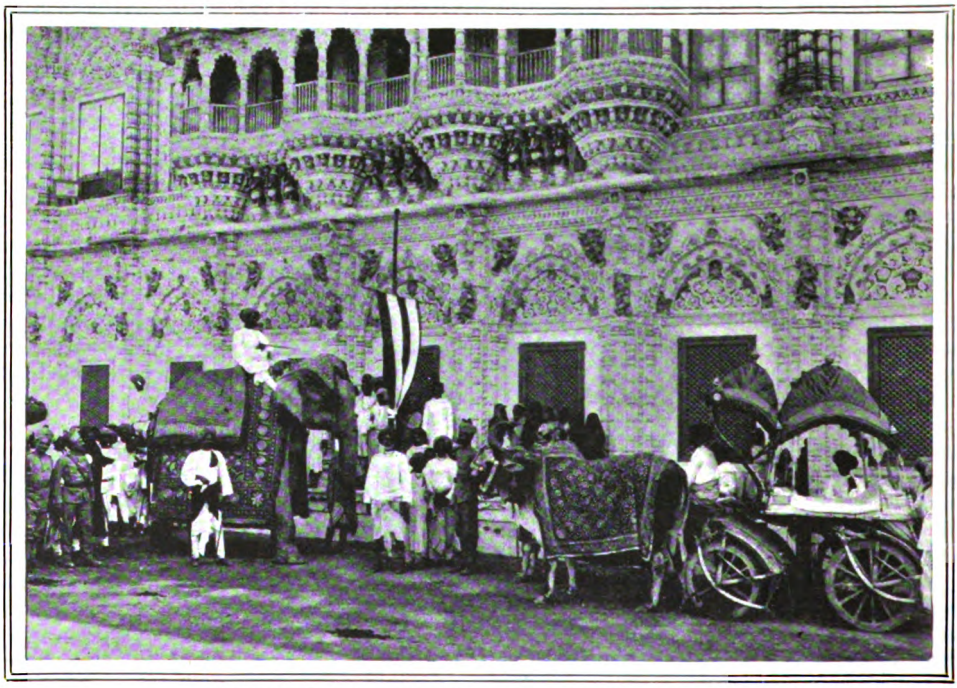
On these occasions he will himself arrange the sides and time the chuckers, taking the greatest interest in the doings of his friends, whom he usually mounts himself, the ponies all being known to him, most of which are Arabs, and very good-looking ponies they are, too. The Jam has got too heavy for the game, in spite of very careful dieting. The polo played at Jamnagar was of good class, the Rajah of Rutlam playing magnificently on all occasions, whilst the Thakore Saheb of Rajkote is sure to make a name for himself at the game.

During my stay at Jamnagar a cricket as well as a football match was arranged, both of which games afforded plenty of amusement to the natives. The football match was a very keen game against H.H. Futideen Khan's Goorkhas, who were the finest adepts ever seen at tripping one up, tactics which were bound to cause the game to become very rough. although no one was seriously hurt when the whistle blew, and no goal had been scored by either team.

On our side Kumar Ahmed Khan played brilliantly at half-back, and would be a sure Blue at the 'Varsity if he went to England. The Jam played in goal, whilst his opponent, Futideen Khan, played centre-forward. The ground was as hard as the road, and whenever a spill occurred the natives would yell with delight.

The cricket match showed up the Jam in a favourable light, since we could not get his wicket, his score being 68 when we secured the last wicket. Some of his staff showed promise of better things, and when the Jam has played a few matches they are sure to benefit from his performances, for they are all very enthusiastic and are natural in all their strokes, with that ease of movement peculiar to the native of India.

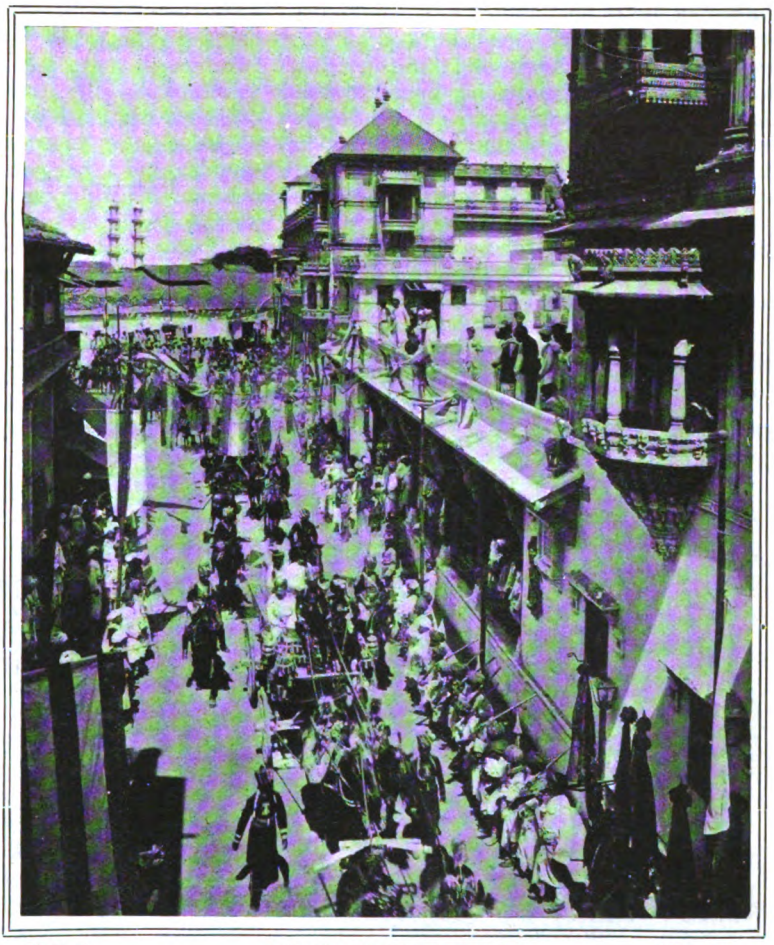
Jamnagar should be very hard to beat before long, especially when a couple of English professionals have got to work on some of the team, who only require coaching to make them very useful members of a side. One of the Jam's secretaries, a Mr. Sumchand, I think, by name, played a capital innings of 48, whilst the Thakore Saheb of Rajkote bowled well with very bad luck, missing the wicket by but little frequently. He is a natural bowler of fast medium pace, who can spin the ball besides having the gift of the swerve. Captain Daniells played a good innings for my side, whilst the bowling honours went to Mr. Turner, a master at Rajkumar College and brother to the Essex



IN THE COURTYARD OF THE ANCIENT PALACE OF THE RULERS OF JAMNAGAR.
From a Photograph.

players of that name.

The Jam Saheb is having a grass cricket pitch made, as well as putting up a pavilion and planting trees for the purpose of affording shelter to spectators, who will, later, have the opportunity of witnessing better-class cricket than is usually seen in India. The English gardener, who is to arrive shortly, will probably find a good deal of his time taken up on the new cricket ground. A new palace, the erection of which was originally commenced by the late Jam, is being proceeded with as quickly as possible, with many alterations and additions made by the present Chief, and, what with the making of roads and laying out of gardens, Jamnagar presents a very busy appearance just now.



From a] A STREET SCENE IN JAMNAGAR. *[Photograph.*

Like other chiefs the Jam Saheb is having cages built round the palace for a lion, panther, and tiger. A spacious building is also being erected for his motor-cars, two Lanchesters and a De Dion, whilst a Calthorpe is shortly to be added to the above-mentioned cars. The Jam Saheb does not care about driving his cars, which is unusual, for most of the native princes are very keen drivers, and perhaps it is just as well that the natives are very quick to get off the road when they hear the horn, for some of the Jam's guests take their first lessons in Jamnagar, like the young Thakore Saheb of Rajkote, who once took it upon himself to drive four of us back from polo through the town. When I asked him, on starting, if he had done much driving, he replied, "This is the first time"; but we managed to get back safely after a few zig-zag performances, though when I left Jamnagar the Thakore Saheb could handle the car very well.

The Jam finds his cars most useful, and his chauffeur has a pretty busy time, especially when his master takes it into his head to dash through the city at three o'clock in the morning, as he did once during my stay, to the cost of one of his police, who received a rare dressing-down for being caught asleep at his post.

The Jam is encouraging every kind of sport amongst his people, and, with other things, is having sent out from England some greyhounds, as hares are numerous, but I fear the dogs' feet must suffer on the hard ground. An attempt is to be made in regard to the rearing of English pheasants in Jamnagar, but there will be more difficulties in the shape of snakes and vermin to contend

with than are to be found at home, although it is more than probable that they will be overcome. At present the sand grouse, snipe, and quail are by no means to be despised, affording as they do excellent sport on occasions; and with the Jam thoroughly understanding everything in connection with the management of small game there will be plenty of sport for those of his guests who prefer the gun to the rifle. The Jam Saheb is passionately fond of shooting, as all his friends know, and his bearing is on all occasions most business-like when out after game, wearing the same set facial expression which was so familiar when he fielded slip with me in Test matches. He seems to give his whole attention to the object in view, and during the ride out to the spot where a kill has taken place he seldom is heard to talk, appearing to be deep in thought for the most part.

From a] WAITING FOR PANTHERS. *[Photograph.*

Nothing appears to give the Jam so much pleasure as the organization of a big game expedition for his friends, and certainly no one knows better than he does how everything should be done. His men know perfectly well that the least mistake in the pitching of the tents will be noticed by the Chief, and consequently the most infinite pains are taken by all concerned. When one considers that close on two hundred bullock-wagons are employed in carrying furniture, eatables, and other necessaries for camp life, it is not difficult to understand that there is a deal of work for someone to superintend.

When a shoot is proposed the first thing to be done is the sending forward of the shikarees three or four days before the shooting party start. These men will tie up kills, in the shape of goats, in various places, and on the arrival of the Jam Saheb there is sure to be news of panther having killed in one or two places. Machans, in the shape of native beds turned upside down and well concealed by the clever screening of foliage, are fixed in trees near to the spot where the kill has taken place. As some of these kills occur close on twenty miles from camp, there is a good deal of riding to be done, and that, too, when the sun is high, since it is not advisable to reach the machan later than six in the evening.

Not more than two rifles can be placed in one machan, together with a sword-bearer in case of attack from a wounded panther.

Mounted on a good Arab, and with the excitement of what is in front of one, the heat is scarcely noticeable, although horsemen are wet through to their coats. On reaching the spot and when settled in the machan the goat is tied up; with the shikaree leaving it and then calling to it once, it will commence to bleat, and with the panther in the neighbourhood its cries should attract it within half an hour or so. One has to remain very quiet throughout the wait, as the leopard is very wary, but throughout the vigil plenty of interest can be obtained by watching the goat as he looks from one direction to another, to finally concentrate a terrified gaze on one spot, which generally means he has scented the panther. A gentle plucking at your sleeve will tell you that your shikaree has seen the game, and, following his eyes, you see the panther crouching some fifty yards away, to finally bound silently forward and knock down the goat; but the moment the sportsman can get in a broadside to reach the heart, bang goes the rifle, and the panther will roll slowly over, his death snarl, with jaws wide apart, being scarcely audible. After two or three minutes' wait, in case the panther is not quite dead, for sometimes he shams death, as many know to their cost, the shikarees are called, and they with their master are eagerly discussing all that has just taken place. Then, if darkness is setting in, we adjourn to the nearest village, when the natives will cook the Jam Saheb a native dinner which we eat with our fingers, then we stretch ourselves out on the various couches produced, and are up with the rising sun next morn to ride back to camp.

In camp everything that luxury can provide is there, camels arriving daily with ice and other delicacies in the tropics, and whilst we await news of the kills the Jam Saheb has his letters and newspapers forwarded daily, which are very acceptable. There is something very charming about the quiet of the jungle, and it is worth much to hear the stillness of the night broken by the majestic roar of the lions, which came on one occasion within six yards of our horses, in spite of the camp fires. The Jam Saheb will never travel without his bard, who has an endless stock of yarns and songs, which cause interest or amusement according to the tales recited or sung. Talent, too, is often forthcoming from the nearest village, and time passes thus very pleasantly during the intervals of hostilities between the beasts of the jungle and the shooting party.

When it is decided to change camp it is very interesting to see half the tents and baggage collected and forwarded in advance, over a hundred men being employed. The Jam's head tent-pitcher is the same man who had the arrangement of the camp for the late Duke of Clarence, and although sixty years of age he is a good deal more active than

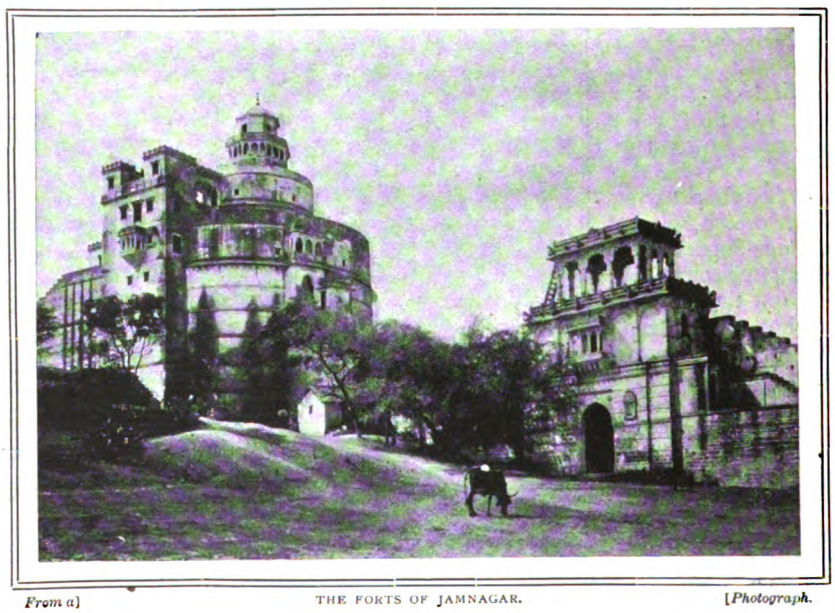
From a] A LION SHOT BY THE JAM. *[Photograph.*

From a] THE NEW PALACE OF JAMNAGAR. *[Photograph.*

many who are half his age. Like others who have refused to share in robbing their master, his own fellows plotted for his dismissal, which they brought about, but he has got his deserts at last at the hands of the present Jam, who is more than generous to his servants, all his own men having had their wages doubled on the day of his installation, when orders were also given for the release of fifty-one men from jail, who also received sufficient money to take them to their homes.

Everything possible has been done for the welfare of his own people, and one of the Jam's triumphs is the complete stamping out of the plague in Jamnagar, where four hundred deaths took place during the first week after his installation, which number he reduced to seventeen in his fifth week, and after another month no deaths from plague took place. The difficulty to be contended with in regard to the scourge is the reluctance of the natives to leave their homes when stricken with plague, one and all making up their minds that the moment they get plague they are sure to die, and they naturally prefer to die in their own rather than in another dwelling.

The Jam called a meeting of his own people and pointed out how anxious he was to help them, but that it was impossible to do that amount of good without their help, which, if given, would result in the stamping out of the plague which has so surely diminished the numbers of the people in Jamnagar. If they would use the new



From a] THE FORTS OF JAMNAGAR. *[Photograph.*

buildings which he was willing to erect outside the city he would also supply food to those families who would make use of the new dwelling-houses. Although only sixty out of four hundred families afflicted availed themselves of the new conditions brought about by the Jam Saheb, who spent some forty thousand rupees in his efforts to tackle the existing evil, yet those natives who returned cured were the means of causing others for the first time to take a broader and more sensible view of the matter. In the past practically nothing was done by the late Jam to put down the plague, preferring as he did to get as far away as possible, leaving his people to get along as best they could, and returning only when the plague had diminished—rather a different programme to that of the present Jam, who has remained with his people throughout the existing conditions, which has possibly done more towards the winning of his people's affections than anything else he has yet accomplished.

The last thing that the Jam appears to wish to do is the enforcing of his power; rather does he make a point of appealing to his people tactfully, which brings about all that he desires. The late Jam had commenced the erection of another palace, with six smaller buildings surrounding the same for his wives. A wall that was intended to reach forty feet was to surround the whole building, which would certainly have had the effect of causing the place to look like a jail. The smaller houses will now be converted into guest-houses, and the wall surrounding the same will reach four feet only, with railings surmounting the same. The large guest-house is also to have various additions and alterations, the Jam Saheb personally superintending the work that is being done.

It is also the intention of the Jam to open out a large port later on, which, when completed, might prove a healthy rival to that of Bombay, unless those experts who have expressed their opinions on the scheme are very much out in their reckoning. One hundred and twenty thousand pounds it is intended to spend on the development of the said port, and when the same is completed the additional revenue which will accrue in the first three years, at most, should repay the original outlay. At present the Jam possesses two steamers running between his own port of Rosie Bunder and Bombay. Before the development of the port is commenced, however, tramway lines are to be laid down for the cars which will shortly be running through the city, so no one can accuse the Jam of allowing the grass to grow under his feet.

It is not generally known that the State of Jamnagar possesses a very fine pearl fishery, no fewer than two thousand pearls having been collected last year, and it can be taken for granted that these pearls will fetch considerably more money in the near future than they have done in the past, since the Jam has for long been a connoisseur of pearls and other gems, and knows their value.

On the day of my departure the Jam took me into the city to show me the State jewels, which occupied three hours, and then many of the stones were not seen. The pearls, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds made a wonderful show; and then there were the State elephant trappings, the State coach, a large assortment of watches, and, finally, the guns and rifles were inspected, one weapon in particular taking the Jam's fancy. Whilst on the subject of guns, it is worth recording that when the late Jam died all the ammunition of the forts was hurled into the water beneath and the guns turned upside down, so the head man of the fort told us, and which he considered an excellent joke from the hearty manner in which he laughed over the matter. The forts as seen in the photograph on the preceding page make an imposing sight and are very handsome structures.

One of the features of Jamnagar is the lancer contingent which the Jam Saheb has gone to much trouble to mount, the hundred and fifty men being a very fine lot of fellows, who look exceedingly well, mounted as they are for the most part on Arabs and Walers, with a few country-breds thrown in. Considerably more money has been spent on the horses than is usually the case.

Mention should also be made of the band which plays on the lawn occasionally during dinner, and which is very creditable to Jamnagar. The dinner-table affords a fine sight with the Jam at the head of the table, surrounded by many of his younger relatives and young princes, and besides these there are some dozen young nephews and cousins, ranging from the ages of eight to fourteen, for whom a tutor is engaged, the Jam taking the greatest interest in their lessons and games, and when anything in the shape of cricket, football, or polo is on this little band will always be amongst the first to arrive on the field.

Some Further Experiences of an Irish R.M.

By E. Œ. Somerville and Martin Ross.

"THE MAN THAT CAME TO BUY APPLES."

IT had been freezing hard all the way home and the Quaker skated perilously once or twice on the northerly stretches. As I passed the forge near my gate I issued an order for frost-nails, and while I did so the stars were kindling like diamonds over the black ridge of Shreelane Hill.

The overture to the Frost Symphony had begun, with its usual beauties and difficulties, and its leading theme was given forth in a missive from Flurry Knox that awaited me on the hall-table. Flurry's handwriting was an unattractive blend of the laundress's bill and the rambling zig-zags of the temperature chart, but he exhibited no more of it than was strictly necessary in getting to the point. Would I shoot at Aussolas the following day? There were a lot of cock in and he had whipped up four guns in a hurry. There was a postscript.

"Bernard Shute is coming. Tell Mrs. Yeates he didn't kill anyone yet this season."

Since his marriage Flurry had been promoted to the position of agent to his grandmother, old Mrs. Knox, of Aussolas, and through the unfathomable mazes of their dealings and fights with each other the fact remained that he had secured to himself the Aussolas shooting at about half its market value. So Mrs. Knox said. Her grandson, on the other hand, had often informed me that the privilege "had him beggared, what with beaters and all sorts, and his grandmother's cattle turned into the woods destroying all the covert—let alone her poaching." Into the differences of such skilled combatants the prudent did not intrude themselves, but they accepted without loss of time such invitations to shoot at Aussolas as came their way. Notwithstanding the buccaneerings of Flurry's grandmother, the woods of Aussolas, in decent weather, were usually good for fifteen to twenty couple of cock.

"A MISSIVE FROM FLURRY KNOX."

I sent my acceptance before mentioning to Philippa that Bernard Shute was to be of the party. It was impossible to make Philippa understand that those who shot Bernard's pheasants at Clountiss could hardly do less than retaliate when occasion served. I had once, in a moment of regrettable expansion, entertained my wife with an account of how an entire shooting party had successively cast themselves upon their faces, while the muzzle of Bernard's gun had followed, half way round the compass, a rabbit that had broken back. No damage had ensued, not even to the rabbit, but I had supplied Philippa with a fact that was an unfortunate combination of a thorn in her pillow and a stone in her sling.

The frost held; it did more than hold, it gripped. As I drove to Aussolas the fields lay rigid in the constraining cold, the trees were as dead as the telegraph poles, and the whistle of the train came thin and ghostly across four miles of silent country. Everything was half alive, with the single exception of the pony. Filled with the idiotic exaltation that frost imparts to its race, it danced upon its frost-nails, shied with untiring inventiveness, and made three several and well-conceived attempts to bolt. Maria, with her nose upon my gaiter, shuddered uninterruptedly throughout the drive, partly because of the pinching air, partly in honour of the sovereign presence of the gun-case.

Old Mrs. Knox was standing on the steps

as I walked round to the hall door of Aussolas Castle. She held a silver bowl in her hand; on her head, presumably as a protection against the cold, was a table-napkin; round her feet a throng of hens and pigeons squabbled for the bits that she flung to them from the bowl, and a furtive and distrustful peacock darted a blue neck in among them from the outskirts.

"ROUND HER FEET A THRONG OF HENS AND PIGEONS SQUABBLED FOR THE BITS THAT SHE FLUNG TO THEM."

"Good morrow, old Sir Thomas Erpingham," was Mrs. Knox's singular greeting. "A good soft pillow for that good grey head were better than a churlish turf of France!"

My friendship with Mrs. Knox was now of several years' standing, and I knew enough of her to gather that I stood rebuked for being late.

"Flurry arrived only half an hour ago—my first intimation of a shooting party!" she continued, in the dictatorial voice that was always a shock when taken in connection with her beggar-woman's costume. "A nice time of day to begin to look for beaters! And the other feather-bed sportsmen haven't arrived yet. In old times they would have had ten couple by this time, and then Mr. Flurry complains of the shooting!"

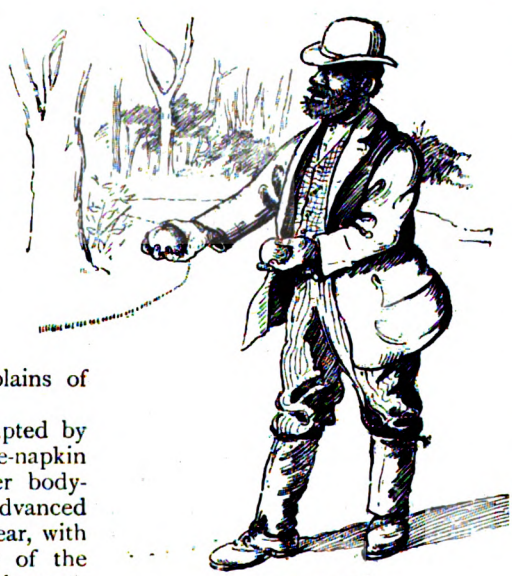
She was here interrupted by the twitching of the table-napkin from her head by her body-woman, who had advanced upon her from the rear, with the reigning member of the dynasty of purple velvet bonnets in her hand. The bonnet was substituted for the table-napkin, much as a stage property is shoved on from the wings, and two bony hands, advancing from behind, tied the strings under Mrs. Knox's chin, while she uninterruptedly fed the hens, and denounced the effeteness of modern cock-shooters. The hands descended and fixed a large pin in the uppermost of her mistress's shawls.

"Mullins, have done!" exclaimed Mrs. Knox, suddenly tearing herself from her captor. "You're an intolerable nuisance!"

"Oh, very well, ma'am; maybe you'd sooner go out with your head naked and soak the cold," returned Mullins, retiring with the honours of war and the table-napkin.

"Mullins and I get on famously," observed Mrs. Knox, crushing an empty egg-shell with her yellow diamonded fingers and returning it to its original donors. "We're both mad, you know."

Comment on this might have been difficult, but I was preserved from it by the approach across the frozen gravel of a short, red-bearded man, Mrs. Knox's gardener, wood-ranger, and ruling counsellor, John Kane. He held in his hands two large apples of arsenical hue, and, taking off his hat to me with much dignity, addressed himself to the lady of the house.



"JOHN KANE."

"He says he'd sooner walk barefoot to Cork than to give three-and-fippence for the likes of them."

"I'm sure I've no objection if he does,"

responded Mrs. Knox, turning the silver bowl upside down over the hens and pigeons. "I dare say it would be no novelty to him."

"And isn't that what I told him!" said John Kane, his voice at once ascending to the concert pitch of altercation. "I said to him if the Lord-Left'nant and the Pope was follying me around the yard of Aussolas offering three-and-a-penny for them apples they'd not get them. Sure the nuns gave us that much for windfalls that was only fit to be making cherubs with."

I might have been struck by the fitness, as well as the ingenuity, of this industry; but in some remote byway of my brain the remembrance woke of a "black-currant cherub" prescribed by Mrs. Cadogan for sore throats, and divined by Philippa to be a syrup. I turned away and lit a cigarette in order to conceal my feelings from John Kane, round whose red beard the smoke of battle hung almost palpably.

"What's between you?" asked his mistress, sharply.

"Three-and-a-penny he's offering, ma'am," declared her deputy, "for Sheep's Noses that there isn't one in the country has but yourself. And not a brown farthing more would he give—the consecrated blagyard!"

Anything less like a sheep's nose than Mrs. Knox's hooked beak, as she received this information, could hardly be imagined.

"You're half a fool, John Kane," she snapped, "and the other half's not sensible! Go back and tell him Major Yeates is here, and wants to buy every apple I have." She dealt me a wink that was the next thing to a dig in the ribs. As she spoke a cart, drawn by a cheerful-looking grey pony and conducted by a tall, thin man, came into view from the direction of the yard. It rattled emptily, and proclaimed, as was intended, the rupture of all business relations.

"See here, sir," said John Kane to me, in one hoarse breath, "when he's over-right the door I'll ask him the three-and-fippence again, and when he refuses, your honour will say we should split the difference——"

The cart advanced; it passed the hall door with a dignity but little impaired by the pony's apprehensive interest in the peacock, and the tall man took off his hat to Mrs. Knox with as gloomy a respect as if she had been a funeral.

John Kane permitted to the salutation the full time due to it, in the manner of one who counts a semibreve rest, while the cart moved implacably onwards. The exact, the psychic, instant arrived.

"HONOMAUNDHIAOUL! SULLIVAN!" he shouted, with a full-blown burst of ferocity, hurtling down the steps in pursuit; "will ye take them or lave them?"

To manifest, no doubt, her complete indifference of the issue Mrs. Knox turned and went into the house, followed by the majority of the hens, and left me to await my cue. The play was played out with infinite credit to both artists and at the full strength of their lungs, and at the pre-ordained moment I intervened with the conventional impromptu, and suggested that the difference should be split. The curtain immediately fell, and somewhere in the deep of the hall a glimpse of the purple bonnet told me that Mrs. Knox was in the auditorium.

When I rejoined her I found Flurry with her, and something in the atmosphere told that here also was storm.

"Well, take them! Take them all!" Mrs. Knox was saying, in high indignation; "take Mullins and the maids if you like! I dare say they might be more use than the men!"

"They'll make more row, anyhow," said Flurry, sourly. "I wonder is it them that put down all the rabbit-traps I'm after seeing in the coach-house this minute?"

"It may be *they*, but it certainly is not *them*," retorted Mrs. Knox, hitting flagrantly below the belt; "and if you want beaters found for you you should give me more than five minutes' warning." She turned with the last word and moved towards the staircase.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," said John Kane, very respectfully, from the hall door; "that Sullivan brought this down for your honour."

He placed on the table a bottle imperfectly wrapped in newspaper.

"Tell Sullivan," said Flurry, without an instant's hesitation, "that he makes the worst potheen in the country, and I'll prosecute him for bringing it here unless he comes out to beat with the rest of you."

Remembering my official position, I discreetly examined the barrels of my gun.

"You'll give him no such message!" screamed Mrs. Knox over the dark rail of the staircase; "let him take himself and his apples off out of this!" Then, in the same breath, and almost the same key, "Major Yeates, which do you prefer—curry, or Irish stew?"

The *cuisine* at Aussolas was always fraught with dark possibilities, being alternately presided over by bibulous veterans from Dublin, or aboriginal kitchenmaids off the estate. Feeling as Fair Rosamond might have felt

when proffered the dagger or the bowl, I selected curry.

"Then curry it shall be," said Mrs. Knox, with a sudden and awful affability. In this gleam of stormy sunshine I thought it well to withdraw.

"'THEN CURRY IT SHALL BE,' SAID MRS. KNOX.

"Did you ever eat my grandmother's curry?" said Flurry, later.

I said I thought not.

"Well, you could take a splint off a horse with it," said Mrs. Knox's grandson.

The Aussolas woods were full of birds that day. Birds bursting out of holly bushes like corks out of soda-water bottles, skimming low under the branches of fir trees, bolting across rides at a thousand miles an hour, swinging away through prohibitive tree-tops; but to me had befallen the inscrutable and invincible accident of being "off my day," and, by an equal unkindness, Fate had allotted to me the station next to Flurry. Every kind of bird came my way except the easy ones, and, as a general thing, when I had done no more than add a little pace to their flight, they went down to Flurry, who never in my experience had been "off his day," and they seldom went farther afield. The beaters, sportsmen every man of them, had a royal time. They flailed the bushes and whacked the tree trunks; the discordant chorus of "Hi Cock! Hi Cock! Cock! Cock! Prrrr!" rioted through the peaceful woods, and every other minute a yell of "Mark!" broke like a squib through the din. The clamour, the banging of the guns, and the expectancy kept the nerves tingling; the sky between the grey branches was as blue as Italy's; despite fingers as icy as the gun-barrels, despite the speechless reproach of Maria, slinking at my heels in unemployed dejection, I enjoyed every breath of the frosty day. After all, hit or miss, a good day with the cock comes very near a good day with the hounds, without taking into consideration the comfortable fact that in the former the risk is all on the side of the birds.

Little Bosanquet, the captain of Coast-guards, on my left, was doing remarkably well, so, apparently, was Murray, the District Inspector of Police; how Bernard Shute was faring I knew not, but he was certainly burning a lot of powder. At the end of the third beat I found myself beside Murray. His face was redder than usual; even his freckles conveyed an impression of impartially sprinkled cayenne pepper.

"Did you see Shute just now?" he demanded, in a ferocious whisper. "Bird

"'DID YOU SEE SHUTE JUST NOW?' HE DEMANDED, IN A FEROCIOUS WHISPER. 'BIRD GOT BETWEEN US, AND HE BLAZED STRAIGHT AT ME!'"

got between us, and he blazed straight at me! Straight bang in my face, I tell you! Only that I was in a dead line with the bird he'd have got me!"

"I suppose that was about the safest place," I said. "What did you do?"

"I simply told him that if ever he puts a grain into me I shall let him have it back, both barrels."

"Everyone says that to Bernard sooner or later," said I, pacifically; "he'll settle down after lunch."

"We'll all settle down into our graves," grumbled Murray, "that'll be the end of it."

After this it was scarcely composing to a husband and father to find Mr. Shute occupying the position on my right hand as we embarked upon the last beat of the Middle Wood. He was still distinctly unsettled, and most distressingly on the alert. Nothing escaped his vigilance; the impossible wood-pigeon, clattering out of the wrong side of a fir tree, received its brace of cartridges as instantly as the palpable rabbit fleeing down the ride before him, and with an equal immunity. Between my desire to keep the thickest tree trunks between me and him, and the companion desire that he should be thoroughly aware of my whereabouts, my shooting during that beat went still more to pieces; a puff of feathers wandering softly down through the radiant air was the sum total of my achievements.

The end of the beat brought us to the end of the wood and out upon an open space of sedgy grass and bog that stretched away on the right to the shore of Aussolas lake. Opposite to us, a couple of hundred yards away, was another and smaller wood, clothing one side of the high promontory near the head of the lake. Flurry and I were first out of the covert.

"We'll have time to run through the rhododendron wood before lunch," he said, looking at his watch. "Here, John Kane!" He put two fingers in his mouth and projected a whistle that cleft my head like a scimitar.

John Kane emerged, nymph-like, from a laurel bush in our immediate vicinity.

"'Tis only lost time to be beating them rosydandhrums, Master Flurry," he said, volubly. "There wasn't a bird in that bit o' wood this winter. Not a week passes but I'm in it, making up the bounds fence against the cattle, and I never seen a one."

"You might be more apt to be looking out for a rabbit than a cock, John," said Flurry, expressionlessly. "But isn't it down in the lower paddocks you have the cattle and the young horses this hard weather?"

"Oh, it is, sir, it is, of course, but indeed it's hard for me to know where they are, with the misthress telling this one and that one to put them in their choice place. Sure she dhrives me to and fro in my mind till I do have a headache from her."

A dull rumble came to us across the marsh, and, as if Mrs. Knox had been summoned by her henchman's accusation, there laboured into view on the road that skirted the marsh a long and dilapidated equipage, silhouetted, with its solitary occupant, against the dull shine of the frozen lake.

"THERE LABOURED INTO VIEW ON THE ROAD THAT SKIRTED THE MARSH A LONG AND DILAPIDATED EQUIPAGE."

"Tally-ho! Here comes the curry for you, Major! You'll have to eat it, I tell you!" He paused, "I'm dashed if she hasn't got Sullivan's pony! Well, she'd steal the horns off a cow!"

It was indeed the grey pony that paced demurely in the shafts of Mrs. Knox's phaeton, and at its head marched Sullivan; fragments of loud and apparently agreeable conversation reached us as the procession moved onwards to the usual luncheon tryst at the head of the lake.

"Come now, John Kane," said Flurry, eyeing the *cortège*, "you're half your day sitting in front of the kitchen fire. How many of my rabbits went into that curry?"

"Rabbits, Master Flurry," echoed John Kane, almost pityingly, "there's no call for them trash in Aussolas kitchen! And if we wanted them itself, we'd not get them. I declare to me conscience there's not a rabbit in Aussolas demesne this minute, with the way your honour has them ferreted—let alone the foxes!"

"I suppose it's scarcely worth your while to put the traps down," said Flurry, benignly; "that's why they were in the coach-house this morning."

There was an undissembled titter from a group of beaters in the background; Flurry tucked his gun under his arm and walked on.

"It'd be no more than a charity if ye'd eat the lunch now, sir," urged John Kane at his elbow, in fluent remonstrance, "and leave Sullivan go home. Sure it'll be black night on him before the misthress will be done with him. And as for that wood, it's hardly we can go through it, with the threes that's down since the night of the big wind, and briers, and all sorts. Sure the last time I was through it me pants was in shreds, and I was that tired when I got home I couldn't stoop to pick a herrin' off a tongs; and as for the floods and the holes in the western end——" John Kane drew a full breath, and, with a trawling glance, gathered Bernard and me into his audience. "I declare to ye, gintlemen, me boots when I took them off was more than boots! They resimbled the mouth of a hake!"

"Oh, shut your own mouth!" said Flurry.

The big rhododendron was one of the glories of Aussolas. Its original progenitor had been planted by Flurry's great-grandmother, and now, after a century of unchecked licence, it and its descendants ran riot among the pine stems on the hillside above the lake, and in June clothed a precipitous half-acre with infinite varieties of pale mysterious mauve. The farm road by which Mrs. Knox had traversed the marsh here followed obediently the spurs of the wood and creeks of the shore in their alternate give and take. From the exalted station that had been given me on the brow of the hill I looked down on it between the trunks of the pine trees, and saw, instead of mysterious mauve blossoms, the defiant purple of Mrs. Knox's bonnet, glowing, motionless, in a sheltered and sunny angle of the road just where it met the wood. She was drawn up in her phaeton with her back to a tumble-down erection of stones and branches that was supposed to bar the way into the wood; beside her was the great flat boulder that had for generations been the table for shooting lunches. How, in any area of less than a quarter of a mile, Sullivan had contrived to turn the phaeton was known only to himself, but he had accomplished it, and was now adding to the varied and unforeseen occupations of his day the task of unpacking the luncheon basket. As I waited for the whistle that was the signal for the beat to begin I viewed the proceedings up to the point where Sullivan, now warming artistically to his work, had crowned the arrangement with the bottle of potheen.

"SULLIVAN WARMING ARTISTICALLY TO HIS WORK."

It was at that moment that I espied John Kane break from a rhododendron bush beside the phaeton with a sack over his shoulder. This, as far as I could see through the branches, he placed upon Mrs. Knox's lap, the invaluable Sullivan hurrying to his aid.

The next instant I saw Murray arrive and take up his allotted station upon the road; John Kane retired into the evergreen thicket as abruptly as he had emerged from it, Flurry's whistle sounded, and the yells of "Hi Cock" began again.

We moved forward very slowly, in order to keep station with Murray, who had to follow on the road the outer curve of the wood, while we struck straight across it. It was a wood of old and starveling trees, strangled by ivy, broken by combat with each other in the storms that rushed upon them up the lake; it was two years since I had last been through it, and I remembered well the jungle of ferns and the undergrowth of briers that had shredded the pants of John Kane, and had held in their thorny depths what Flurry had described as "a dose of cock." To-day the woods seemed strangely bare, and remarkably out of keeping with John Kane's impassioned indictment; the ferns, even the bracken, had almost disappeared, the brier-brakes were broken down and laced with black paths, and in the frozen paste of dead leaves and peat mould the hoof-marks of cattle and horses bore witness against them, like the thumb-prints of a criminal. In the first ten minutes not a gun had been let off; I anticipated pleasantly, if inadequately, the remarks that Flurry would address to John Kane at the conclusion of the beat. To foreshadow John Kane's reply to Flurry was a matter less simple.

Bernard Shute was again the next gun on my left, and kept, as was his wont, something ahead of his due place in the line; of this I did not complain, it made it all the easier to keep my eye on him. The idle cartridges in his gun were obviously intolerable to him; as he crossed a little glade he discharged both barrels into the firmament, where, far above, in tense flight and steady as a constellation, moved a wedge of wild geese. The wedge continued its course unshaken, but, as if lifted by the bang, the first woodcock of the beat got up in front of me, and swung away into the rhododendrons. "Mark!" I shouted, loosing an innocuous cartridge after him. Mr. Shute was equal to the occasion, and let fly his usual postman's knock with both barrels. In instant response there arose from behind the rhododendrons the bray of a donkey, fraught with outrage and terror, followed by crashing of branches and the thunderous galloping of many hoofs, and I had a glimpse of a flying party of cattle and horses bursting from the rhododendron bushes and charging down a grassy slope in the direction of the road. Every tail was in the air, the cattle bellowed, and the donkey, heading the flight, did not cease to proclaim his injuries.

"How many of them have you hit?" I shouted.

"I believe I got 'em all, bar the cock!" returned Mr. Shute, with ecstasy scarcely tempered by horror.

I hastened to the brow of the hill, and thence beheld Mrs. Knox's live-stock precipitate themselves on to the road and turn as one man in the direction of home. With a promptitude for which I have never been given sufficient credit I shoved my gun into the branches of a tree and ran back through the wood at my best pace. In that glimpse of the rout I had recognised the streaming mane, chestnut and white legs of the venerable Trinket, the most indomitable old rogue that had ever reared up generations of foals in the way they should not go, and I knew by repute that once she was set going it would take more to stop her than the half-demolished barricade at the entrance to the wood.

As I ran I seemed to see Trinket and her disciples hurling themselves upon Mrs. Knox's phaeton and Sullivan's pony, with what results no man could tell. They had, however, first to circumnavigate the promontory; my chance was, by crossing it at the neck, to get to the phaeton before them. The going was bad and the time was short; I went for all I was worth, and Maria, mystified but burning with zeal, preceded me with kangaroo leaps and loud and hysterical barks.

A mossy wall ringed the verge of the hill; I followed Maria over it, and the wall, or a good part of it, followed me down the hill. I plunged onward, amid the coiling stems and branches of the big rhododendrons, an illuminative flash of the purple bonnet giving me my bearings. A sort of track revealed itself, doubling and dodging, and dropping down rocky slides, as if in flight before me. It was near the foot of the hill that a dead branch extended a claw and, with human malignity, plucked my eyeglass from my eye and snapped the cord; the eyeglass, entering into the spirit of the thing, aimed for the nearest stone and hit it. It is the commonest of disasters for the short-sighted, yet custom cannot stale it. I made the usual comment, with the usual fervour and futility, and continued to blunder forward in all the discomfort of half-sight. The trumpeting of the donkey heralded the on-

coming of the stampede; I broke my way through the last of the rhododendrons and tumbled out on to the road twenty yards ahead of the phaeton.

Sullivan's pony was on its hind legs and Sullivan was hanging on to its head. Mrs. Knox was sitting erect in the phaeton with the reins in her hand.

"Get out, ma'am! Get out!" Sullivan was howling, as I scrambled to my feet.

"Don't be a fool!" replied Mrs. Knox, without moving.

The stampede was by this time confronted by the barrier. There was not, however, a moment of hesitation; Trinket came rocketting out over it as if her years were four instead of four-and-twenty; she landed with her white nose nearly in the back seat of the phaeton, got past with a swerve and a slip up, and went away for her stable with her tail over her back, followed with stag-like agility by her last foal, her last foal but one, and the donkey, with the young cattle hard on their flying heels. Bernard, it was very evident, had peppered them impartially all round.

I found myself snatching blindly at whatever came to my hand of the head-stall of Sullivan's pony, who was alternately ramping heraldically, and wriggling like an eel in the clutches of Sullivan. What I caught was a mingled handful of forelock and browband; the pony twitched back his head with the cunning that is innate in ponies, and the headstall, which was a good two sizes too large, slid over its ears as though they had been buttered, and remained, bit and all, in my hand. There was a moment of struggle in which Sullivan made a creditable effort to get the pony's head into chancery under his arm; foreseeing the issue, I made for the old lady with the intention of dragging her from the carriage. She was at the side farthest from me, and I got one foot into the phaeton and grasped at her.

At that precise moment the pony broke away with a jerk that pitched me on to my knees on the mat at her feet. Simultaneously I was aware of Sullivan at the opposite side catching Mrs. Knox to his bosom as the phaeton whirled past him, while I, as sole occupant, wallowed prone upon a heap of rugs. That ancient vehicle banged in and out of the ruts with an agility ill-befitting its years, while, with extreme caution and the aid of the side rail, I gained the seat vacated by Mrs. Knox, and holding on there as best I could, was aware that I was being seriously run away with by the appleman's pony, on whom my own disastrous hand had bestowed his freedom.

"I WAS AWARE OF SULLIVAN CATCHING MRS. KNOX TO HIS BOSOM AS THE PHAETON WHIRLED PAST HIM."

The flying gang in front, enlivened no doubt by the noise in their rear, maintained a stimulating lead. We were now clear of the wood, and the frozen ditches of the causeway awaited me on either side in steely parallel lines; out in the open the frost had turned the ruts to iron, and it was here that the phaeton, entering into the spirit of the thing, began to throw out ballast. The cushions of the front seat were the first to go, followed with a bomb-like crash by a stone hot-water jar, that had lurked in the depths of the rugs. It was in negotiating a stiffish out-crop of rock in the track that the back seat broke loose and fell to earth with a hollow thump; with a corresponding thump

I returned to my seat from a considerable altitude, and found that in the interval the cushion had removed itself from beneath me and followed its fellows overboard. Near the end of the causeway we were into Trinket's rearguard, one of whom, a bouncing young heifer, slammed a kick into the pony's ribs as he drew level with her, partly as a witticism, partly as a token of contempt. With that the end came. The pony wrenched to the left; the off front wheel jammed in a rut, came off, and the phaeton rose like a live thing beneath me and bucked me out on to the road.

A succession of crashes told that the pony was making short work of the dash-board. For my part I lay something stunned and with a twisted ankle on the crisp whitened grass of the causeway, and wondered dully why I was surrounded by dead rabbits.

By the time I had pulled myself together Sullivan's pony was continuing his career, accompanied by a fair proportion of the phaeton, and on the road lay an inexplicable sack, with a rabbit, like Benjamin's cup, in its mouth.

Not less inexplicable was the appearance of Minx, my wife's fox-terrier, whom I had last seen in an armchair by the drawing room fire at Shreelane, and now, in the *rôle* of the faithful St. Bernard, was licking my face lavishly and disgustingly. Her attentions had the traditional reviving effect. I sat up and dashed her from me, and in so doing beheld, in the distance, my wife in the act of taking refuge in the frozen ditch, as the cavalcade swept past, the phaeton and pony bringing up the rear, like artillery.

"What has happened? Are you hurt?" she screamed, speeding to me.

"I am; very much hurt," I said, with what was, I think, justifiable ill-temper, almost annoyed to find that my leg was not broken.

"But, dearest Sinclair," panted Philippa, now bending over me, "*has* he shot you? I got so frightened about you that I bicycled over to—Ugh! good gracious"—as she trod on and into a mound of rabbits—"what are you doing with all these horrible things?"

I looked back in the direction from which I had come, and saw Mrs. Knox advancing along the causeway arm-in-arm with the now inevitable Sullivan (who, it may not be out of place to remind the reader, had come to Aussolas early in the morning with the pure and single intention of buying apples). In Mrs. Knox's disengaged arm was something that I discerned to be the bottle of potheen, and I instantly resolved to minimize the extent of my injuries. Flurry and various items of the shooting party were converging upon us from the wood by as many and various short cuts.

"I don't quite know what I am doing with the rabbits," I replied, "but I rather think I'm giving them away."

As I spoke something darted past Mrs. Knox, something that looked like a bundle of rags in a cyclone, but was, as a matter of fact, my faithful water-spaniel, Maria. She came on in zig-zag bounds, in short, maniacal rushes. Twice she flung herself by the road-side and rolled her snout into the ground, like the coulter of a plough. Her eyes were starting from her head, her tail was tucked between her legs. She tore frantically with her claws at the solid ice of a puddle.

"She's mad! She's gone mad!" exclaimed Philippa, snatching up as a weapon something that looked like a frying-pan, but was, I believe, the step of the phaeton.

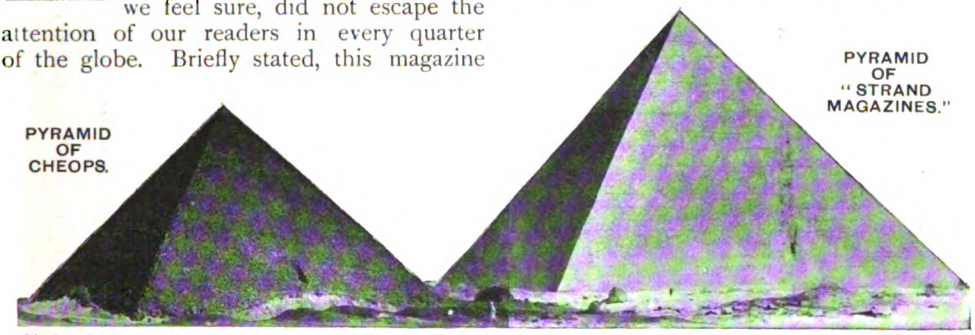
Maria was by this time near enough for me to discern a canary-coloured substance masking her muzzle.

"Yes, she's quite mad," I replied, possessed by a spirit of divination; "she's been eating the rabbit-curry."

"SHE CAME ON IN ZIG-ZAG BOUNDS."

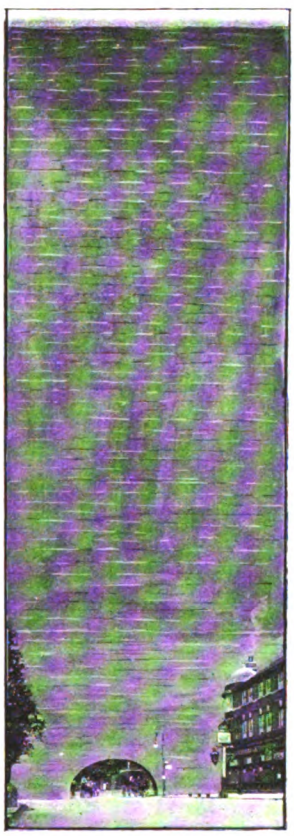
OUR TWO HUNDREDTH NUMBER.

ON the cover and title page of the last issue of THE STRAND MAGAZINE a tiny, but most important, announcement was made which, we feel sure, did not escape the attention of our readers in every quarter of the globe. Briefly stated, this magazine then reached its two hundredth number. A new generation has grown up since that day in December, 1890, when NUMBER ONE, with its pale blue cover, now so familiar, first appeared on the bookstalls. What events have happened since then—what changes have come over the world, and, not least, over the world of literature and of periodicals and newspapers! Yet THE STRAND has not only survived these manifold and amazing changes, of most of which it was itself the cause, but it continues as popular as when it first made its modest bow to the public.



If the 80,000,000 "Strand Magazines" were to be built up in pyramidal form, the result would dwarf the Pyramid of Cheops.

From the summit of a 201st number we may profitably cast a glance or two behind and note a few surprising facts connected with our mere material achievement. For one thing, 79,363,000—or, in round numbers, 80,000,000—copies of THE STRAND MAGAZINE have been published. At first blush it is hard to realize what this means. Mankind does not easily think in millions, especially when the units are so complex and varied as each number of this magazine.

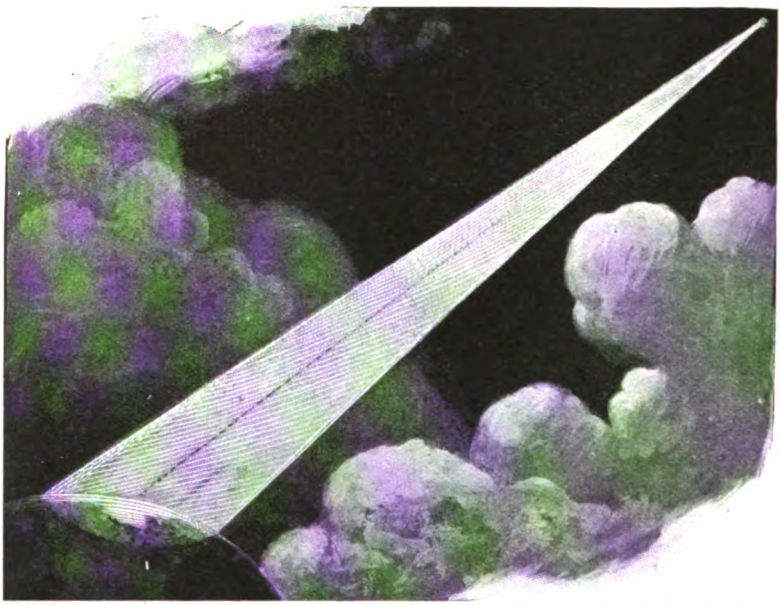


This illustration shows a segment of the great wall, 24 miles in length and 270 feet high, which it would be possible to build with 80,000,000 "Strand Magazines" round the London four-mile radius.

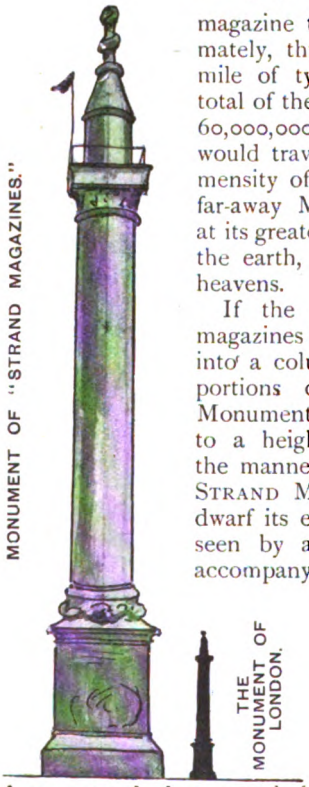
The ancient rulers of Egypt delighted to perpetuate their memory by means of colossal monuments, which generally took the form of a pyramid. One of the most famous examples of this species of constructive ingenuity is the Pyramid of Cheops, 481 feet high, but, mammoth erection though this be, it would be dwarf-like by the side of a similar pyramid composed of the 80,000,000 STRAND MAGAZINES already given to the world.

To come nearer home, an ingenious builder could, with the aforesaid materials at his disposal, construct a barrier around London's twenty-four-mile circle, of which Charing Cross is the centre, which would be 270 feet in height, and so completely screen the greatest city in the world from the eye of all suburban beholders. Our second illustration shows a segment of this imaginary rampart crossing the four-mile radius at Hammersmith, closely adjacent to St. Paul's School.

To take another example: suppose the lines of type in every copy of THE STRAND were to be joined together so as to form one enormous line. To what distance would it reach? Now, in each number of this



The lines of type printed in this Magazine since its commencement would, if joined together, reach from the earth to the planet Mars. The line of type is here shown running up the centre of the beam of light.



A monument closely compacted of "Strand Magazines" would make the famous London Monument seem tiny in comparison.

magazine there is, approximately, three-quarters of a mile of type. The sum-total of the whole would be 60,000,000 miles, and this would traverse the vast immensity of space to where far-away Mars, even when at its greatest distance from the earth, twinkles in the heavens.

If the total output of magazines were compacted into a column of the proportions of the London Monument, which reaches to a height of 202 feet, the manner in which THE STRAND Monument would dwarf its exemplar may be seen by a glance at the accompanying diagram.

Mountain-climbing provides another example of that ancient formula, "The higher the fewer." That is to say, for each intrepid climber who masters the secret of Mount Everest, the highest mountain on the earth, there are, we suppose, a thousand who pant laboriously up the snowy fastnesses of Mont Blanc. There are few, we think, who would dare the ascent of a mountain of STRAND MAGAZINES, for, although Everest can boast of raising his peak skywards five and a half miles above the ocean—quite a respectable height in its way—yet, were the aforementioned 80,000,000 STRANDS to be laid flat one above the other, they would tower to an altitude of 474 miles in the air.

THE STRAND may be said to be the pioneer of the modern sixpenny magazines, which aim at universal popularity. The spectacle of 80,000,000 sixpenny-bits placed in a row might form the day-dream of an impecunious schoolboy. It is one the adult mind

80,000,000 "STRAND MAGAZINES" LAID FLAT ONE ABOVE ANOTHER ARE 474 MILES IN HEIGHT.

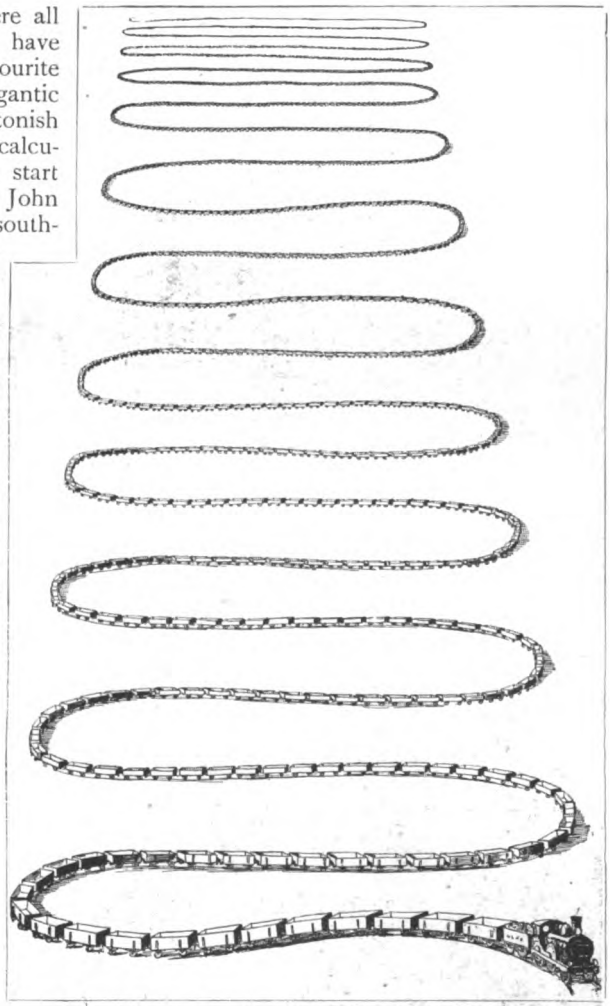
MOUNT EVEREST, 5½ MILES HIGH

If the 80,000,000 "Strands" were piled one on top of the other they would attain the enormous altitude of 474 miles.

cannot of itself conceive. Yet were all the sixpences which the public have tendered in payment for their favourite periodical to be formed into a gigantic line, the result might considerably astonish even those accustomed to colossal calculations. Suppose a man were to start laying sixpences upon the ground at John o' Groat's, and he were to continue southwards doling out his 80,000,000 coins as he went, he would probably die of ennui before he had completed the first thousand yards; but supposing him to survive a journey lasting six months, and he were to plank down his sixpences along the roadway so that the rim of one just touched the rim of the other in front of it, he would be able to traverse the length of Scotland and, passing through York and London, wend his way westward to Land's End ere his vast store of specie came to an end.

Even in these days of transport

The sixpences paid by purchasers would, if laid in a line, reach from Land's End to John o' Groat's via London.

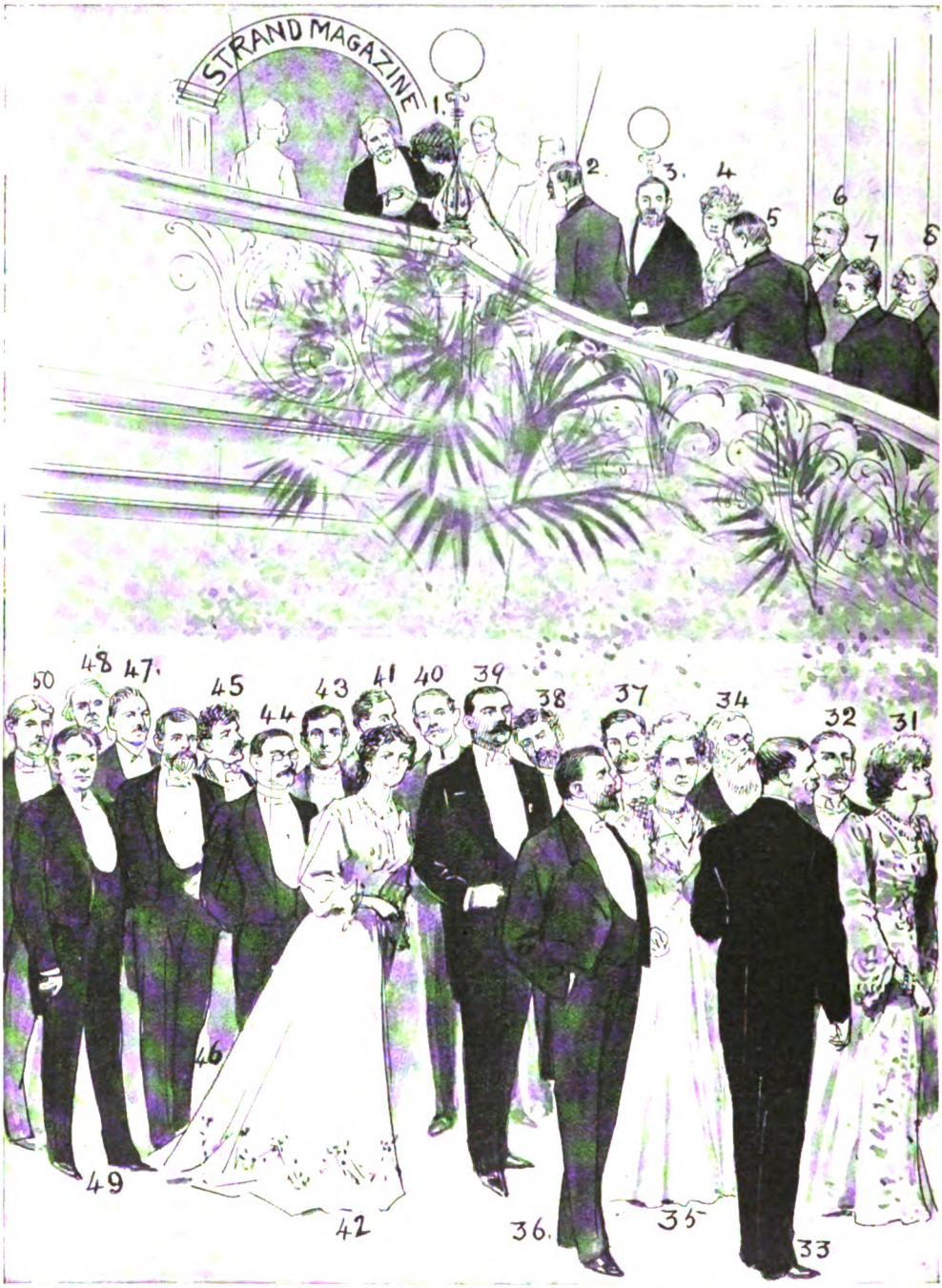


To transport by rail the 80,000,000 "Strands" would require 4,630 trucks, which would extend over 30 miles.

by leviathans, a train over thirty miles long would be a rather astonishing spectacle. Nevertheless, such a vehicle would be required to carry the total number of STRAND MAGAZINES that have been poured forth from our publishing offices during the last sixteen and a half years. To total up the number of trucks here depicted would be a laborious task. There are 4,630 of them, and each contains over 17,000 magazines.

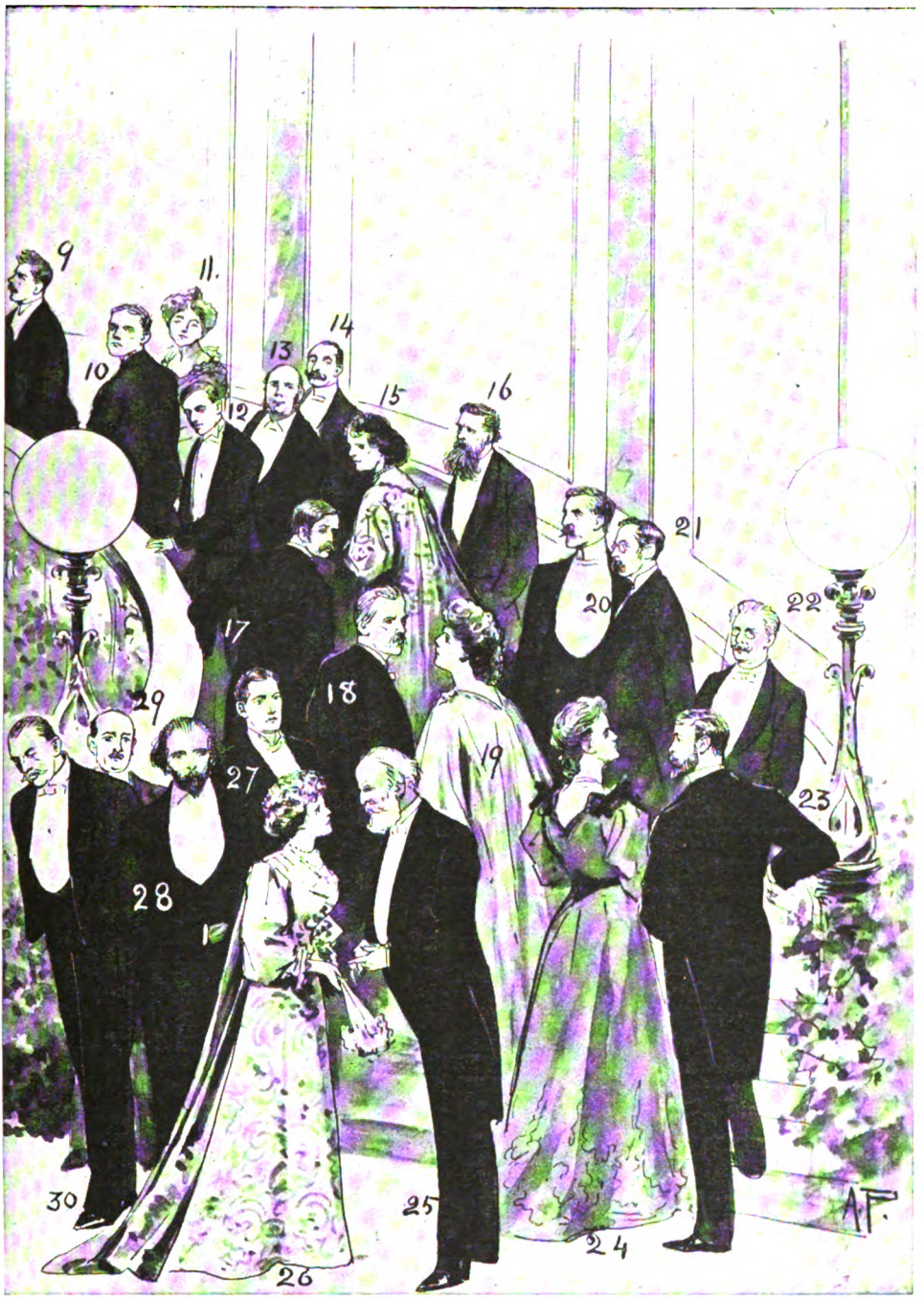
To the two hundred numbers most of the leading writers of the day have contributed. If we could imagine the Editor-in-Chief holding a public reception of his chief contributors, we should conjure up, as our artist has done, a scene of astonishing literary interest.

The difficulty is to find what name of great



AN IMAGINARY RECEPTION BY THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF FIFTY OF THE LEADING

1. Mrs. C. N. Williamson. 2. C. N. Williamson. 3. Grant Allen. 4. Miss Florence Warden. 5. E. W. Hornung. 12. W. W. Jacobs. 13. Sir R. Ball. 14. Cecil Raleigh. 15. Miss Braddon. 16. Manville Fenn. 17 H. G. Wells. 23. Sir Gilbert Parker. 24. Mrs. L. T. Meade. 25. Lord Avebury. 26. Miss Winifred Graham. 27. A. E. W. Mason. 33. Harry de Windt. 34. Sir W. Besant. 35. "Carmen Sylva." 36. G. R. Sims. 37. Stanley Weyman. 43. C. B. Fry. 44. Rudyard Kipling. 45. Marriott Watson. 46. Robert Barr.



LITERARY CONTRIBUTORS TO "THE STRAND," WHOSE PORTRAITS APPEAR AS FOLLOWS:—

6. Clement Scott. 7. Frankfort Moore. 8. Max O'Rell. 9. Quiller Couch. 10. W. B. Maxwell. 11. "Rita." 18. Dr. Nansen. 19. Miss Marie Corelli. 20. Max Pemberton. 21. Arthur Morrison. 22. H. W. Lucy. 28. Hall Caine. 29. J. Holt Schooling. 30. Cutcliffe Hyne. 31. Mme. Sarah Bernhardt. 32. F. Marion Crawford. 38. Barry Pain. 39. Sir A. Conan Doyle. 40. Dr. F. Cowen. 41. H. A. Vachell. 42. E. Nesbit (Mrs. Bland). 47. W. Clark Russell. 48. D. Christie Murray. 49. Jerome K. Jerome. 50. Bret Harte.

contemporary note is absent from the list, although the illustrator was unable, on account of space, to include more than fifty of our more prominent contributors.

The illustrations of THE STRAND have ever been one of its most important features. Of these there have been no fewer than 30,000, the originals of which have been produced by hundreds of the cleverest artists of the day. These designs vary very much in size, but it is found that, on an average, each is something over one foot square. This would represent rather more than 30,000 square feet of wall space, or sufficient to form a picture exhibition for which it would require the British National Gallery, the Louvre, and the Berlin Gallery to supply adequate hanging space.

It may prove of interest to our readers to learn that about £100,000 has been spent on the literary contents of THE STRAND. The chief item of cost, however, has been the paper, of which 40,000 tons have been used, at a cost of £963,241. Think of a paper bill of nearly a million sterling!

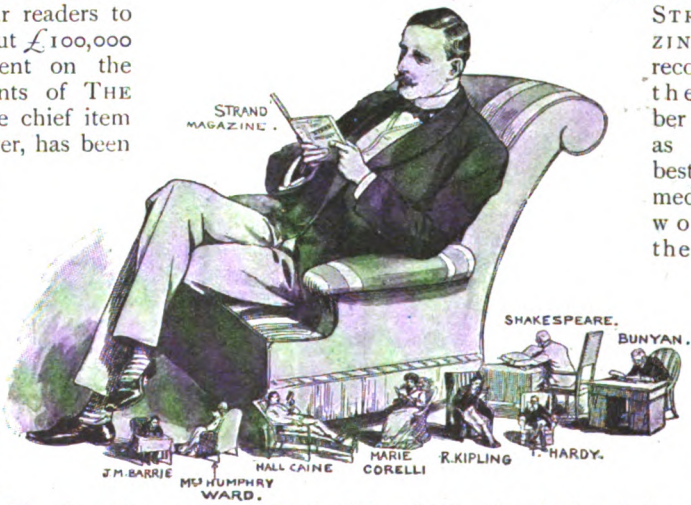
After the Bible the volumes most circulated are Shakespeare and Bunyan. Of the former, in various editions, not fewer than 4,000,000 copies have been sold. Of modern writers Mr. Hall Caine, Mrs. Humphry Ward, Miss Marie Corelli, Mr. Kipling, Mr. Thomas Hardy, Mr. Barrie, and others have been gratified with large sales of their entertaining productions. But, estimating their sales as accurately as possible, and comparing them with the 80,000,000 copies published of THE STRAND, the lustre of their respective achievements is, as the following diagram shows, somewhat dimmed.

THE NATIONAL GALLERY, BERLIN.

THE LOUVRE, PARIS.

THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON.

To secure reasonable wall-space for the 30,000 originals of the pictures in "The Strand," our own National Gallery, the Louvre, and the Berlin Galleries would be required.



The above figure represents the circulation of "The Strand Magazine" as compared with the circulation of the most popular authors in the language.

Nothing in the foregoing has been said about a very important and popular part of the magazine — that part devoted to advertisements. Statistics dealing with this department would yield equally striking results, for THE STRAND MAGAZINE has been recognised from the first number to the last as one of the best advertising mediums in the world, and the amount of trade which has been transacted through its pages is such as, if it were set forth in figures, would fairly stagger the imagination.

The Golden Isle.

By Edith Rickert.

MAGUELONNE-LA-SAUVAGE, a cabin of cane and straw overrun with trellised roses, shaded by tamarisks—the station is a mere oasis in the limitless grassy wilderness of the Camargue.

In the month of May alone pilgrims pass by on the route to the Holy-Maries-by-the-Sea; and for the three days of the fête the steel bars of the toy railway, which stretch between the unknown cities of the north and the southern sea, are humming with trains that bear the sick to and fro in their questing of health. After that the Camargue is still again but for the wind in the reeds and tall grasses

Once, on the third day of the fête, the station-master beckoned his wife out from behind the sun-screen to see a horseman who came riding in from the west over the trackless prairie. He was dressed like a "guardian" or horse-drover of the plains, and bestrode an enormous young cream-coloured giant of a beast, thick-jointed, square-built, short-necked, broad-faced, ugly as a devil, but "What a horse!" said the station-master. "The creature could keep on till the Judgment Day."

But his wife was looking at the rider, who had dismounted some rods away, and stood nearly a head taller than his bearer, looking southward for the train.

"Holy Maries!" said she to herself, "what a man!"

Then the train cut short her admiration, though she watched still, with her babies clinging about her skirts, and the youngest in her arms. She saw the stranger make a swift, keen examination of all his saddle-gear, saw him lead his horse so near the advancing train that for a moment she thought both would go under the wheels. Then she saw the beast standing quietly, though untied, and the man walking along the first-class carriages, even before they stopped, as if he expected to find someone he knew.

One moment she looked away, to learn who might be getting out at Maguelonne-la-Sauvage; the next she was aware of a scream, a rush, a galloping horse, and the disappearance of the stranger who had fascinated her. Then she was one of a little crowd on the station platform, standing among the tangle of roses, and watching a man and a horse and something blue that they carried, plunging into the sunset—spell-bound until the beast and the rider and the blue streak had become a blurred, dark mass, and this had diminished to a speck and was drowned in the waves of grass.

All this time the locomotive had been quietly puffing, while the engine-driver and the fireman gaped with the others; and an elderly lady, very blond, very pink, had been alternately shrieking and fainting in the arms of her maid—without tears, be it remarked, which would have injured the surface of her face.

When at last the crowd turned to her, pursuit long since having become hopeless, she piped:—

"I am the Marquise de Valincourt-Rougy, and my daughter—oh, my daughter——"

"But who—who—who?" demanded the sympathetic onlookers. Alas! the lady had begun fainting too soon to know.

"Did nobody observe him?" asked a voice.

"I did," said the station-master's wife.

"And what was he like?"

So amazing had been the stranger's effect upon this good woman that she could not find it in her heart to betray him. "Nothing unusual," she lied.

Well, the engine-driver drew a long breath, and said the train must be on its way; the station-master retired within his reed cabin to telegraph up and down the line; the fainting marquise was left in many willing hands, honoured by contact with the aristocracy; the few natives of Maguelonne-la-Sauvage, after a buzz of excited talk, dispersed along the footpaths; the train continued its moderate pace to Arles; and before sunset the little adventure was concluded. Mlle. de

Valincourt-Rougy had disappeared from the ken of her little society, which swings on an orbit between Paris and the Riviera, with its centre in a certain old château overlooking the Saône; and equally from the ken of the great newspapers that gird the visible world. All that was known was that somewhere in the savage, lonely west she had vanished utterly.

Just as the news was first flashed about, the girl herself was struggling into a dim perception of what had happened. After the rush of terror, when she had been lifted from the train and swung somewhere on high, she had fainted; and for a while after she had come to her senses she felt only the pound of hoofs, the sweep and beating of the wind, the swish of grasses and crackle of reeds, with occasionally a splashing sound, and twice or thrice the flip of water against her cheek. She lay still, just as she had been flung, with her eyes pressed hard against some rough woollen stuff, and closed—poor little ostrich!—to the situation. Her memory was busy trying to piece together what had happened. She had thought the big, red-faced man was meaning to enter the railway carriage; but as she moved to hold her skirts aside, he had looked down at her and asked, "Mlle. de Valincourt-Rougy?" Doubtless, in her amazement at the question, she had nodded or looked assent. . . . Then had come the whirl and tumult of motion and flight, and the past had faded away with her mother's shriek.

By degrees her courage revived and she moved her face a little and opened her eyes. She found herself between the waving, cream-coloured mane of a horse and an immense grey flannel chest overhung by a thick, dark beard, in which she could see a few threads of grey. Higher she dared not look at first; but let her glance sweep the darkening horizon. Then, with sudden determination to know the worst, she began to struggle in the man's arms. As if divining her purpose, he relaxed his grip, even held her away a little—that she might stare at him her fill. And at once her eyes were held, as those of the station-master's wife had been, by the power that flashed from the protruding blue eyes, by the fierce curve of the nose, by the forward thrust of the jaw, as the beard blew to right and to left. His face was browned by exposure, and reddened, it might be by wind or by wine—she could not tell which; and the great laugh that he sent rolling across the prairie was barbaric. She had a moment's thought to jump blindly into the high grasses, even if it were only to be trampled upon by the horse's hoofs. But again he divined her thought: "It would be worse than useless, my pretty."

Even as he spoke the great horse slowed to a walking pace, and stepped carefully into water. With that she was lifted, swung in the air, and found herself perched on the man's shoulder, with his right arm stretched up to hold her firm. Abruptly the horse sank and took to swimming in what seemed to her a

"SHE FOUND HERSELF PERCHED ON THE MAN'S SHOULDER."

boundless mere. As they retreated from the reedy shore, then was her chance to leap; but instead, with a little startled cry, she clasped the stranger's neck and hung close.

She could not endure to see the waste of grey water, with its islets here and there of rushes; but closed her eyes tight. When she had to look again she saw a clump of tamarisks among the reeds, and felt that the horse touched ground. Even in her terror she noticed that the cream-coloured beast seemed to know the place, and whinnied with satisfaction as he scrambled ashore.

She felt herself swung downward and forward and set gently upon the earth; and while she swayed a moment for a footing, the horseman dismounted and faced her, shaking the water from his leather leggings. Tall as she was, she did not reach his shoulder.

"Well, Mlle. de Valincourt-Rougy," said he, "welcome to the Golden Isle."

She put both hands to her throat to check sudden hysteria; the man was clearly mad!

She fought bravely for self-control, as they walked on the short soft turf down an alley of tamarisks that met overhead. She heard the horse pad away alone into the darkness, saw that illumination came from a lantern hanging to a branch, and that her captor took it down and swung it in their path.

At the end of the alley shone another light; and presently she saw a reed cabin for all the world like the little wayside stations along the path of the pilgrims.

"Supper first," said the big man, lifting the sun-screen and pushing her gently forward into a dimly-lit passage. She had a moment's hope of another person to whom she might appeal. But the strange, bare room in which she found herself was empty.

He motioned her to take off her hat and gloves. The brave old blood of the Valincourt-Rougys in her laughed to see the long suède gloves that had entered into this barbaric adventure; but she obeyed, without asking herself why she obeyed.

She saw that he was studying her with a kind of amused interest. But he seemed to appreciate the delicate points of her blue voile gown over its petticoat of green silk, and of the green and purple bird on her hat of blue tulle. She was a sensitive young woman, and in the light of his look of friendly criticism she forgot her fear enough to pat her artful rolls of blond hair and to glance about for a mirror.

"There is no looking-glass," said the man, abruptly. "And you don't suit the room—*hein?*"

She gave it a thought: bare reed walls and mats, reed curtains that flapped gently in the breeze at the two long windows, a bare wooden table set out with brown and yellow country ware, an unpainted dresser of wood, two straight-backed chairs with reed seats. The only beautiful thing in the room to her mind was a great bowlful of blue and yellow irises between two candles on the table.

"You are a work of art," he continued. "There's no place for such things on the Golden Isle. Come, now—you paint?"

She shrank from his touch; but the finger laid upon her cheek was gentle enough.

"Not yet—that comes a little later, I suppose; but you powder and you torture your hair—and it is not all your own—*hein?*"

Mad? He was as mad as—— Would nobody ever come? She smoothed her desperation into an appealing: "Shall we have supper?" Surely there would be servants or somebody about—and while he was busy eating she might plan—might try——

Again he stared and laughed at the way she took him. Then he said, politely, "By all means. It is quite ready. Sit down."

He went to the dresser, and brought out a barley loaf, a cheese, and a bottle of wine. He cut and poured for both; he even had the effrontery—or the insanity—to offer to drink her health. But she could not touch the food, though she drank the wine, and it lifted her flagging courage.

He ate—well, she told herself, as such a giant would eat after a long day's fast; but for all that she could not rid herself of the impression that he was a gentleman.

At last he pushed away his chair, looking comfortable—even sleepy. She wondered if she should be able to manage him.

"Well," said he, "I suppose, brought up as you have been, you prefer a priest. He's waiting for us in the next room."

She pretended to laugh. "Are you going to bury me to-night?"

"No," said he, calmly; "but I'm going to marry you, of course."

She could have screamed; but she set her lips, and after a moment said, with equal calm: "That is impossible. I am already affianced."

"To whom?" he asked, leaning across the table, suddenly.

"To the Vicomte de Mornas."

The man was silent a moment; then he grinned, saying: "He'll have to make the best of it, then. I never go back on my word."

"HE EVEN HAD THE EFFRONTERY—OR THE INSANITY—TO OFFER TO DRINK HER HEALTH."

"To whom have you given your word?" she asked.

"I give it to you now—this moment. You will be my wife within the hour." He looked at his watch and held it up before her that she might note the time. But she was yielding to the terror of the situation. "Oh! Heaven save me!" she cried, under her breath.

"You don't want the priest, then?" he said.

"How can you think——?" She broke down in her speech.

"Very good. I'll send him back at once. The boat has been waiting a long time." He went to the door, and the reed curtain rattled in his hand; but there he faced her again: "It's as you like, you know; but here you are, and here you stay as long as I choose to keep you."

She could not speak.

"Good. I send him away."

She moved quickly: "Wait——"

"Eh, well, he comes."

She rose hastily to stop him, but let the reed curtain swing back into her hand. After all, there might be some help in the priest.

When he entered the room she darted forward, meaning to throw herself at his feet. But the madman stopped her, seizing her by the wrist. "Useless," he said; "the priest is stone deaf, and his mind is always on his studies besides. He cannot save you."

And, indeed, a glance at the mild, unobservant eyes of the priest convinced her that tears and heroics would be wasted. He would not comprehend. She bent her head—not weeping, but thinking wildly over her chances. Would the ceremony be valid or not valid? And which in Heaven's name did she want it to be?

"It will dispose of the Vicomte de Mornas, my dear," said the man, suddenly. "It will make an end of him. And now we'll have in the witnesses."

Somehow, from somewhere, there came through the door, as if in answer to a summons, an old man and a young girl. The latter had a brutish face, vacantly smiling; but the old man looked kind. Adèle was ready to throw herself on his mercy.

"Tut-tut," said the madman, "again it's of no use. The girl's an idiot, you can see; and her father is stone deaf, like the priest. Come, now, make up your mind. Do you want to be married or not?"

She turned and looked at him, realizing that he was tremendous in strength, relentless in will, remorseless in his madness. What could she do?

"If I consent," said she, "will you leave me in peace till to-morrow?"

"Why?" he asked, calmly, then seemed to reflect aloud: "After all, why not? There's plenty of time—all the time in the world. A convent-bred girl——"

So he knew that as well! With a sudden impulse she crossed herself. In the old days there were stories of how the devil had come.

She grew dazed—was half fainting; but she seemed to feel that someone held her up when her every muscle relaxed to let her sink to the floor. In front of her was a great expanse of white—it came to her afterward as the priest's attire—and lights twinkled on a shining dome; was it the priest's head? A voice mumbled and droned, and came to a pause now and again;

and whether she had spoken or what she had said she could not well remember. A moment she awakened out of her dream and saw the shining of a ring on her finger; then the whole scene faded, and she was awakened, long after, it seemed, by the cool wind blowing across her wet face. She lifted herself on one elbow and perceived that she was in another room, lying on a low bed of cane, and that the idiot girl sat by her side with a basin of water.

They looked at each other in silence; then Adèle discovered that her arms were bare, that she had been undressed and put into a long, coarse smock, such as peasant women wear. And on her finger the ring gleamed in the candle-light. A sudden fury at the indignity lent her strength.

"Go away," she said, hoarsely. "Go away—you thing!"

The vacant face suddenly twinkled over with laughter, but the girl departed without protest, taking the candle with her.

Then the captive arose and fumbled in the darkness for her belongings, dressed hurriedly but clumsily, being not used to perform such service for herself, from her finger flung the ring far into the darkness, and sought means of escape. She had no light, no matches, no knife, no scissors; but she groped her way about the wall until she found the door, and shook it with her little strength. Then she went on to the close-shuttered windows and tore at them with desperate fingers to find some fastening; but she might as well have clawed solid rock.

Backward and forward she went in her mad seeking; and the third time or the fourth the door yielded to her clutch and swung easily outward.

She did not pause to consider what this meant; but fled down the passage until, just where she expected to find the door to liberty, she ran into the arms of the giant.

He held her firmly and gently, saying in the amused tone that already she had come to detest: "It is too late for a walk, my pretty. Go back to bed. You are as safe as at Château Rougy on the Saône." As if with a sudden thought he felt for her left hand, and when he had found it, he said: "Come, come, you have lost your ring already. This will never do. Zouè shall help you find it."

"SHE GREW DAZED—WAS HALF FAINTING."

Somehow she was back in the room; and the idiot girl was there, kneeling to take off her little, high-heeled shoes, already untied; and somehow she was again in the peasant's

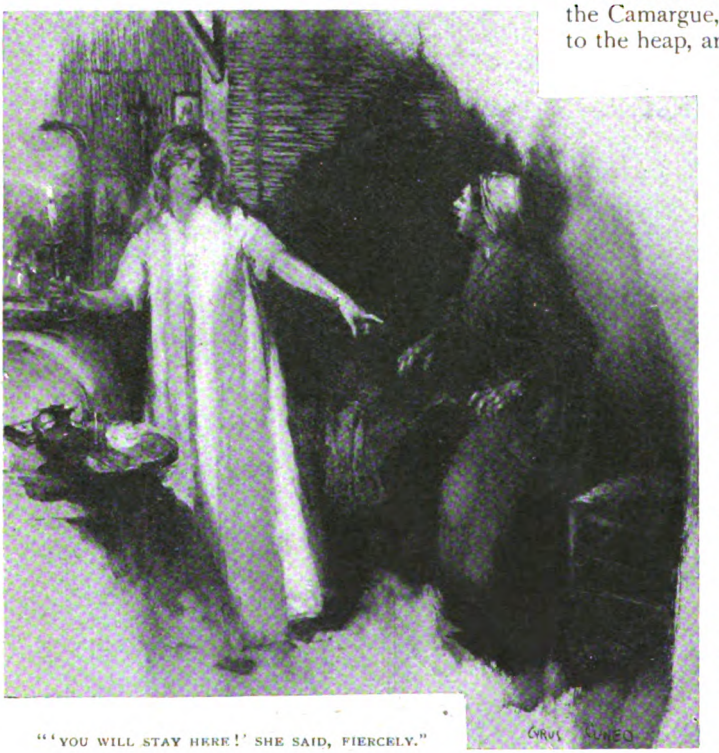
smock, and the ring had been found and set on her finger.

But the Valincourt-Rougy blood was alive now. She seized the candle and clung to it, when the idiot would have taken it away.

"You will stay here!" she said, fiercely, and the girl dropped at once into a chair.

For hours Adèle kept prayerful vigil, until the idiot snored with open mouth and the candle burned low. Then a sudden troubled sleep overwhelmed her, in her exhaustion; and she knew no more of her situation until the dawn came in through the shutters, now open, and the idiot was again standing over her:—

"The master bids you get up and dress yourself and prepare the coffee."



"'YOU WILL STAY HERE!' SHE SAID, FIERCELY."

She turned on her heel, almost running; and Adèle, strong again in courage with the morning light, sat up and stared after her, and laughed. Prepare the coffee? Prepare the coffee? The descendant of the Valincourt-Rougys? She felt equal now to an encounter with the madman.

She sprang out of bed, with a hasty glance about her bare, reed-lined room, and ran to the window that was unshuttered. It looked upon a great trellis of Gloire de Dijon roses, against a background of tamarisks—nothing else.

She turned to find her clothes, but they were gone. There was a bath; the girl must have brought it in and filled it while she slept. She tried it daintily with her foot. The water was cold; she could never endure that. Instead of her silks she found only peasants' garments of unbleached, coarse linen and a dress of brown wool. She shuddered to touch them; but they were clean, and necessity pressed. When she came to do her hair it appeared that the very roll that built up her pompadour was gone. This made her more angry even than the low, broad sandals that replaced her Paris shoes. She flung to the floor the kerchief and apron of pink-and-white frilled muslin, the dainty cap of the Camargue, added her wedding-ring to the heap, and with her yellow hair all about her shoulders, dashed out in a flame of wrath to confront her jailer.

She found him blocking the sunlight at the end of the passage; she wondered if he had spent the night there.

"Good morning, Adèle. You are only half-dressed. Where is your cap? Your kerchief?" His eyes lit up with the mad humour that she feared. "Where's your wedding-ring?"

"Where are my own clothes?" she demanded, haughtily.

"In the fire," said he. "They were my clothes—your only dowry—and I did not like them. They are burnt—roll, high heels, and all. Now go and do up your hair, and be quick. I am waiting for my coffee."

She stared at him, and could find no words. To her immense disgust, her anger had melted, and she turned, like a good little child, to obey.

It was Zouè who came and parted her hair, and, while she wept silently, did it up, in the Madonna-fashion of the Camargue, under the tiny cap; and Zouè who patted the fichu into place and tied the apron-strings in a coquettish bow; and Zouè who patiently went on her hands and knees until

she had found and replaced the wedding-ring. Then Zouè took the captive's hand and fairly dragged her into a cool, reed-lined kitchen, shining with copper and pewter-work.

Ten minutes later, with tears on her long lashes and her delicate lips set into a hard line of resolve, Adèle—under instruction—carried the coffee-tray to a little table outside the door, where her master sat reading some paper or journal.

"I won't wait so long another day," said he, quietly, without looking up. Then, as the tray went down very hard, with an over-splashing of coffee and milk, he raised his eyes to meet such a fiery Valincourt-Rougy glance as should have killed him on the spot.

He rose, and before she realized what he would be at, had taken her face between his hands and kissed her four times or five, each time more gently, more sweetly than before.

"You have been badly brought up, my child," said he. "We must teach you better. Ah, the marquise—the marquise!"

Even in her confusion and anger she wondered that he should speak so of her mother.

He would not let her escape, but sat down again and took her on his knee until she had drunk coffee out of his cup.

When at last she was free to go she forgot that he was mad, forgot the need for caution—remembered only her own anger—and faced him with deliberate passion: "If there is no other way, I will kill you!"

"So—so," he answered, soothingly, as he drank his own coffee. "If you like. But it would be wiser for you to learn as quickly as possible—what you must learn."

Then he whistled, and the cream-coloured horse, ready saddled, came trotting from behind the Gloire de Dijon roses. The tyrant rode away, bareheaded, down the tamarisk alley, whistling as he went. She did not see him again that day.

"What you must learn"—he had said. That day it seemed to be peeling potatoes. It was not that other humiliating duties lacked. Between them, the old man and the idiot girl made her understand clearly that she was to help in all the household tasks; and never for a moment was she allowed to lose the one or the other from her sight. She knew that the madman had come in for his *déjeuner*: but the old man had carried in the meal that she, under the guidance of the idiot girl, had prepared in the kitchen. And, after all, the old man brought back many of the dishes almost untouched, with the message that she must do better on the morrow.

I spare you the details of that day. She had little time for thinking; and even so—poor child!—her mind was half crazed with futile plans for escape and dreams of revenge, fighting with memory of the morning's kisses that had been so strangely, so overwhelmingly sweet.

Late in the afternoon she got away, when the old man had turned his back and seemed absorbed in the feeding of his silkworms in a little shed adjoining the kitchen.

She ran like the wind, even in her unaccustomed sandals, down the turf path between the tamarisks, came out into the open, and all in a breath she perceived why the place was called the Golden Isle: everywhere the reeds and rushes were thickly interspersed with yellow flags, so that all the earth seemed full of treasure. She could not see the lagoon, but the breath of it was in the air. Hither and thither she ran to find it, but only waded knee-deep, sometimes waist-deep, in that green and golden sea. When at last her ankle sank into bog she knew that, for all her trouble, love of life was still so strong within her that she could never leap to death, even if the mere lay spread at her feet.

As she stood testing the soft ground with her foot and wondering what chance might lead to safety, a shadow fell between her and the sun, and she looked across at her unknown husband on his cream-coloured horse. He came splashing through the marsh, and without a word passed his arm under her shoulders, lifted her like a child, and swung her before him on the saddle. This time she did not cry or struggle; and she was amazed to find that she liked the rush of the wind against the galloping horse. And when they came within the purple shadow of the garden, there stood the deaf old man, smiling tranquilly.

She rebelled no more that day, not even when she had to set forth the supper and try to eat the sour black bread. At first she minced it a good deal; but after a time he lost patience and laid before her a country portion, and she felt impelled to eat it. In the end she admitted to herself that hunger had seasoned the coarseness of the food.

"That's better," said he, when the task was accomplished. "Now you've had a meal we can talk. Time's up you know."

"What time?" she fenced.

"Your day of grace. Well, am I an ogre that you stare at me so?"

She grew reckless. "I think you are quite mad."

He took it soberly. "You are not the first

who has said so. I have my ideas like other men, only, perhaps, the difference is, I am strong enough to enforce them. The world is on your side—perhaps you are right. Tell me—am I so terrible?"

"Yes," she answered, on the edge of tears.

"No weeping," said he, rudely. "No hysterics. I won't have it. Keep your temper and you will be all right. You didn't mind the black bread to-night, did you? Well, you won't mind me——"

"Please — please——" she entreated, tragically.

"Come, now," said he, not affected, as it seemed, by her emotion; "you are playing to the gallery, you know—where there is no gallery. That's all put on. Why can't you be decently natural, and act as you feel?"

She was so amazed that she asked, "How do I feel?"

"*Eh bien*, you'd like me well enough, if you hadn't a theory that you ought to hate me. The natural being has been buried these many years under powder, false hair, silk finery, and false ideas. The more you rebel, the longer it will take to excavate you. The end will be the same." He came and bent over her, suddenly, pleading and tender. "Come, now, be a sensible child and give up in the beginning—*hein?*"

But she was not ready yet and broke into the prohibited tears.

He gave her a second, not more; then he shook her gently but decidedly by the shoulder. "Stop—stop at once. This won't do. I want to hear—eh, well, tell me about your life. It may do you some good."

It was a successful diversion. She dried her eyes and stammered it out, he tugging at his beard in silence. When she had finished, he commented: "A more commonplace little history it would be hard to find; but devil take me if it ends that way! And so you were pledged and promised in the good old way? Who—did you say—was the man? Ah, so, the Vicomte de Mornas. Who ever heard of him? Some booby——"

She took fire: "He is a very great man. He has explored Africa and Siberia; and he never misses anything that he shoots at; and his library is full of his own lion-skins. He has been often spoken of in journals, and he is decorated with the Legion of Honour, and some day he will——"

"Ah, you loved him very much, I perceive," said he, dryly.

She hung her head: "It was my father who, before he died, arranged it all."

"I see, I see. Do you know I have a curiosity to see the young man's face? You have not a portrait of him?"

She pulled at a ribbon about her neck, and flung before him the daintily tinted miniature of a beardless, blue-eyed youth.

The big man studied it awhile, then: "It's a pretty boy. No wonder you grieved for him. It must have been a loss!"

The irony in his voice drove her to reply: "I never saw him but once—and I was a little girl. But, oh, if he had only come on the pilgrimage with us, as mamma invited him to do, he might have saved me from this—this——"

"Nonsense!" said he, and tossed her back the portrait. "You don't want to be saved. When will you learn to be honest? Go to bed. Bolt your door inside—I shall lock it from without. I don't mean to play sentry again. You know better now how safe you are on the Golden Isle. It can keep you until Doomsday." As she hesitated a little, he said, grimly: "No, you need not kiss me. The will is everything. Good night."

This time she did not keep vigil long, but cried herself into a peaceful, dreamless sleep.

The next morning she was trim in her Camargue dress; and she prepared the morning coffee with subdued sadness, but with no sign of active rebellion.

"Come, now," said the master, "this is better. You are getting on."

He did not offer to kiss her as on the morning before; nor did he comment upon her charming appearance, as she had expected, and she was, therefore, half ready to shrink away and be stormy or scornful.

He rode abroad at once, and again she struggled with household tasks, but through having much to think about found them less laborious and less distasteful than on the preceding day. The dinner was apparently more to her lord's liking, as she judged, not from any word of praise that he sent, but from the amount he ate. In the afternoon, when she had finished what they bade her do, she made no second attempt to run away, but sat on a bench outside the house among the yellow roses, as pale, as golden as they.

There she saw the master riding up in the twilight. When he dismounted, swinging off his hat and throwing it on the grass, and leaving the horse to find his own way, she looked at him with a faint colour beating in her cheeks.

And she did not move when he came to sit by her side. Doubtless it was the instinct of convention that taught her to pose, with her hands clasped on her knees and her eyes cast

down on them; but she knew exactly how long he studied her profile and when he turned away to the gleam of golden irises at the end of the tamarisk avenue.

He spoke abruptly: "Yesterday you were less tragic than you anticipated; to-day you are less miserable than yesterday. You are getting used to me—you will learn. But you are thinking much—what is it?"

She stared a little, but was silent.

He laughed, but softly, not with a barbaric howl: "I do not think it is a plot to murder me, nor yet to escape. I might tell you"—her eyes were turned to him in sudden entreaty — "well then, I will not. But you may like to know something else. I rode many leagues to-day to telegraph to your mother. I judged that she had had punishment enough for your bad upbringing."

"'ADÈLE,' SAID HE, AND TOOK HER HAND AS REVERENTLY AS SHE COULD DESIRE, 'THIS MIGHT BE A LITTLE PARADISE FOR LOVERS WHO WERE FREE.'"

She half rose and looked across at him, with a soft gleam in her eyes that seemed to forgive much of his transgression. "What did you say to her?"

"I will tell you presently." He seemed to wait for her speech.

"How have I been badly brought up?" she asked, flushing.

"You have been thinking," he said, "have you not worked it out? You have your own cleverness — the shrewdness of the Valincourt-Rougys. But your mother—with all respect to Madame la Marquise—is cased like a beetle in convention. She has brought you up to know nothing outside her little world of fad and fashion. You were never useful in your life until yesterday. Have I opened your eyes a little?"

"By what right," she said, her voice shaking, "have you dared to treat me so?"

He did not answer her question. "Forget it," said he. "It was necessary at first. But now I have proved you; your mother could not spoil the good stuff. You have within you the power to live, as my wife must live—free in soul and body from the chains society has forged."

She looked at him long and strangely.

"Adèle," said he, and took her hand as reverently as she could desire, "this might be a little Paradise for lovers who were free — this Golden Isle of mine."

And as she still looked, he continued: "But you hate me still?" His magnificent manhood, his resolute face, the light in his eyes—were full of challenge.

Slowly she shook her head: "I have tried with all the strength of my will, and—I cannot."

"Then," said he, "you are mine by right. And you must know that I have not done all this by madness, but because I could find no better way. If you had been other than yourself it might have been tragedy, Adèle. But now we shall go back into the world some day, and we shall wander and we shall live. Ah, we shall live! Shall I tell you what word I sent to your mother? I told her you were married to the Vicomte de Mornas and spending your honeymoon on the Golden Isle. It is half true; for the rest——?"

"How We Escaped from the Harem."

With an Introduction by Grace Ellison.

I.—Introduction.

IT is astonishing, considering the number of Europeans who visit Constantinople, how little is known of harem life. The word itself conjures up all kinds of mysteries, beyond which many have never had the slightest inclination to penetrate. The fate of the poor unhappy Turkish woman interests them as little as if she were some uncivilized being beneath contempt, and if they think of her at all it is as she was more than fifty years ago, the beautiful, idle creature amongst many, with no other aim in existence than to wait the orders of her lord and master. To-day all this has changed. The modern Turkish woman receives a far better education than many of her Western sisters. When the latter is busy visiting, going to concerts, or even indulging in sports, the Oriental, within the barred windows of her harem, follows these movements in spirit. With a knowledge of seven languages, three Oriental and four European, foreign governesses, and as many books as she requires, little escapes her attention. Then, when she understands European civilization, her own degradation forces itself more strongly upon her, and her existence becomes unbearable. What a Turkish woman suffers morally only she herself can tell, and there is no remedy but suicide.

Many have found consolation in this manner, for self-destruction is not considered the same crime in Turkey as in other lands. Poison is very easily procurable. A few drops in a cup of coffee, and life and all its misery has ended. Flight has been suggested as another solution for these unhappy women, but how almost impossible this is the following article will show. Turkish women are too carefully guarded, and the penalties that await fugitives—the poison cup, the Bosphorus, or incarceration for life in the Fortress of Yemen—too great for them even to think of running such a risk.

When, therefore, it was announced that two young daughters of Islam had actually reached Paris, with great danger to themselves, everybody was anxious to know their adventures, everybody was curious to hear from their own lips what life was like on the other side of the gilded bars. For some time these two young fugitives were obliged to use Servian names to protect themselves from interviewers. Editors of magazines and reviews have offered them large sums of money to write their adventures, but so far they have refused, out of respect to their father, who still remains one of the Sultan's favourite Ministers and confidants. And who knows when this autocratic monarch might not visit the sins of the children on the father, for flight is a crime that no Mohammedan can pardon!

Now, however, with their permission, I am publishing extracts from the letters and from the diary which these two sisters have written together ever since they could hold a pen, and which has been their consolation through their unhappy girlhood. It is only when one hears from the inmates themselves what life is like in a harem, and understands something of the existence of a Turkish woman, that one can appreciate the courage and intelligence of these two women, who have left their Fatherland for ever.

THIS PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS THE ORDINARY EUROPEAN DRESS WORN BY A TURKISH LADY IN THE SECLUSION OF THE HAREM.

II.—Harem Life.

How is it possible in a short article to describe the tragedy of our girlhood? How are we to justify the manner in which we flung open the doors of our harem, and sought, in a new world, life and liberty? Besides, who will understand? Only a Turkish woman, who has felt the degradation of harem life, can offer us her sympathy.

In trying to sum up all the causes that have gradually detached us from our Turkish life, no one reason stands out more than another. It was the life itself that was odious. Each day brought some fresh stab, some new grievance or humiliation, until at last, convinced that there was no remedy, no possibility of breaking the fetters that had bound us so closely to the customs of our country, we resolved to risk everything, to sever all our nearest and dearest family ties, to leave behind a life of luxury such as only Orientals understand it, and to open our eyes in a fresh world. Our flight was the result of twenty-three years of suffering.

THE COSTUME OF CEREMONY WORN IN THE HAREM.
From a Photograph.

Had we been brought up in ignorance of Western ways we should never have known what we were missing. But we were not. In education only were we free. With almost American ideas of independence, how could we be expected to accept our fate, like all true followers of Islam, "because it is written"? We had ever before us, too, the fact that we were French—that we had no right to be in Turkey. In order to marry a beautiful Circassian lady, whom he chanced to see when visiting Constantinople, our grandfather, the Marquis de B——, willingly abandoned his home, his fortune, country, and religion, and we have now to suffer the consequences of his action. Three years after this love-match the girl-bride passed away. Many thought the blow would kill my grandfather, but Time, the healer, came to his rescue sooner than even he expected. Shortly afterwards he purchased for himself seven other beautiful wives, some of whom have survived him.

Compared with the statistics of this country, each one would cost about the price of an elephant. Polygamy, I may add, is not so usual as in former days. My father, for example, suffered so much inconvenience from the indiscretions of his various "mothers" and their relations (for wives, aunts, sisters, and friends all live together) that he vowed he would content himself with only one wife. A story is told in Turkish society of a well-known Pasha who was the happy possessor of forty-nine children. One day, when the death of one of his daughters was announced, he had not the slightest recollection of ever having seen her!

At the age of thirteen etiquette, not Islam as many suppose, ordains that sequestration shall begin. Until then, compared with the existence that follows, unlimited freedom is allowed. Unveiled we go to parties, Embassies, and concerts, and feel the captivity that follows more in consequence. From this time we become the inmates of the harem, and no man, except he be husband, father, brother, and sometimes a cousin, is allowed to cross the threshold. None but these privileged individuals ever sees a Turkish woman without a veil. Harem life interests the men of the establishment little, for their visits are few and far between; probably they are aware of the fact that family feuds are often a daily occurrence. Insults and petty jealousies between the members of the master's different families crush all possibility of happiness, and become dangerous in a country where poison circulates so freely and where the life of a woman is of so little value.

There is no doubt that our Turkish life is far from healthy. We take neither air nor exercise. Through the barred windows of our harems the sun rarely shines, and if we go out we usually drive. If we walk, however,

the Parisian gowns we wear in our drawing-rooms are covered with a long black cloak, and over our faces is a thick black veil which, in the summer, becomes unbearable. Through these veils we can see without being seen, but to accomplish this we often get into an ugly habit of squinting, which it is difficult to lose. On returning to the house after three hours' walk the pain across one's eyes and forehead is excruciating. Turkish girls are usually to be seen in groups of five or six huddled together as if to protect themselves from an invasion, and they are always accompanied by Abyssinian eunuchs, whose duty it is to report to the master of the house all that has taken place during the promenade. Imagine how many times a day our pride is wounded! We read of countries where woman is even considered man's superior, yet we in Turkey are absolutely beneath consideration. Ask a Turk how many children he has—if he has three daughters he will answer, "None." Never are our tastes consulted; never would one of us dare to question the caprices of a husband or father, for experience has taught us in what a brutal manner they can enforce obedience. Often the tyrant will delight in giving his wives an exhibition of his power. He will refuse to allow her to go into her garden for weeks, or even give orders that all callers are to be refused admittance.

"IF WE WALK, THE PARISIAN GOWNS WE WEAR IN OUR DRAWING-ROOMS ARE COVERED WITH A LONG BLACK CLOAK."

A wedding is an event in the social life of a Turkish lady, yet to marriage most of us look forward with dread. Who knows what Fate has in store for us? For we are never allowed to see the man who is to have entire control of our destinies until the contract is signed. It is not unusual for a bride of sixteen to find herself united for life to a man thirty years her senior, in which case she must expect to be doubly guarded. Adorned in the most elegant of Parisian satin gowns, bedecked with jewels, wearing a diamond crown, she is escorted to the house of her future husband with all the pomp due to her noble rank. On the threshold of her new residence she is greeted by the master, who leads her to a throne erected for the occasion, then retires to the Selamlik* till the evening. Only when he is out of sight are the doors thrown wide open, and all the ladies of the neighbourhood — from princess to beggar — come to pay their respects to the girl-bride. Such is a Turkish marriage.

How many Europeans taking part in the *fêtes* that seal our misery look at us with envious eyes! The glamour of the ceremonies dazzles them, and so intently do they gaze at our diamond crowns and priceless pearls that they forget to peep behind the veil and see the falling tears.

Life as a girl was monotonous, lonely, and humiliating to a degree. Life as a married woman was unbearable. It is when I think of these loveless unions, this life of misery through the careless choice of others, that my whole being rises in rebellion. I will be free—free at any cost.

What is death compared to this bitter slavery! When the brides of other lands are still under the spell of the honeymooning days, when life seems to stretch out before them like a lovely bed of roses, I, the Turkish bride, was making my plans to escape.

III.—Our Escape.

It took us quite three years to plan our

* Part of the house reserved for men.

flight. At times everything seemed to conspire against us, and again and again we dreaded that circumstances had overcome us. Had we fully realized from the first all the difficulties we had to face, and the dangers through which we had to pass, I hardly think we would ever have dared to attempt it.

First of all, whom were we to trust with our secret? Unaided we could not succeed, yet who knows if the person to whom we were to communicate our plans would not sell them to our parents for a larger sum than we could offer? Unlike most Turkish girls, we had an allowance for clothes and books. In most houses the steward pays all the bills, it being considered dangerous to allow us to have money, for money means power. For three years we hardly spent a penny of our pocket-money. Our governess taught us to make all our wardrobe, an accomplishment we have found useful ever since.

Before three years after our decision was taken we could not start. One of us was still a minor, and as such our Government could force us to return should we succeed in escaping. The long, weary wait, however, gave us time to consider carefully who would be heroic enough to procure us passports.

In this respect we were lucky. The French lady who for eight years had given us singing lessons was to leave Constantinople. We had not much difficulty in persuading her to delay her departure till the date we had fixed, and, having given us her passports, rely on the generosity of a friend to do the same for her. She it was, too, who time after time took all our luggage away in little parcels and sent it to Venice to await our arrival. There were still two more problems to solve. How were we, with all our watchful relatives, to absent ourselves from home for twenty-four hours without arousing suspicion? And how were we to fix our departure on a day when the master of my sister's house was detained on important business?

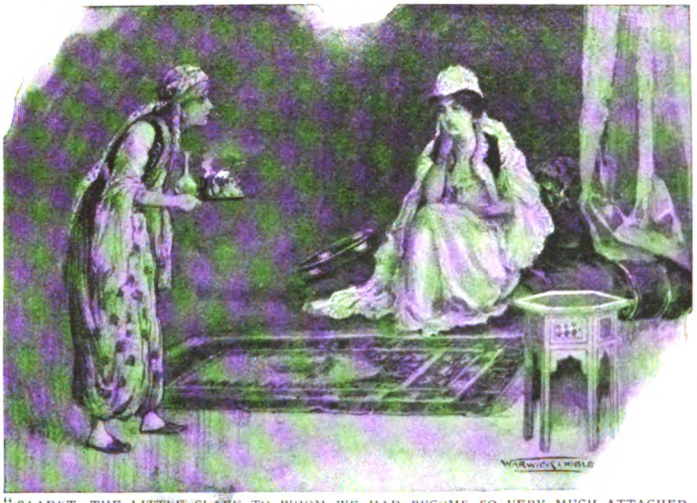
Monday, the 18th of January, was the date we had fixed for our flight. Early—very early—I was awake; and although I had hardly slept, I was calm—too calm, perhaps, considering it was the day when we were to say good-bye to all and begin life anew. Long before daylight I had counted and recounted every object in my luxurious Turkish room, then when the clock on my marble mantelpiece struck five I rose and dressed. Everything was ready. All that remained for me to do was to sign some photos of myself for the friends I was leaving, yet whom I loved so dearly. These, of course, were to be found after my departure, and I must confess to feeling very much like a suicide writing the letter which is to be found after the deed is done.

For months and months we had waited for this moment, yet to-day for the first time my hand trembled. Hateful as our surroundings were, now we were about to abandon the veil, the symbol of our faith, it seemed as if my very soul was being torn in two. What were we about to attempt? After all, was it possible? Could we go straight to liberty, or, rather, was there not a great deal more trouble in store for us? Yet, as I thought how all these years we had suffered in silence planning our escape, was it not cowardly now to be afraid? Was the daylight ever so long in coming? Oh! how slowly does the time pass when one is anxiously waiting.

At last, Saadet, the little slave to whom we had become so very much attached, brought me up my breakfast, greeting me with her usual smile, and "Inch'Allah" ("God be with you"). There is nothing she would not do for us; she had been brought up with us, as it were. A beautiful Circassian with golden hair and black eyes, and all the intelligence of her race, she had always listened to our lessons, had learnt to speak French, and who knows if in some manner she did not understand the sorrow that was eating our hearts. Her mother had been one of our slaves at her age, and with her wedding dowry our parents had given her her papers of freedom; but to leave us, again and again she emphatically refused. More than one person's share of this world's trouble had fallen to her lot, yet she seemed to delight in suffering. With the Turk's firm conviction that one must joyfully accept the fate that has been written, how often did she not repeat, "With the elect of Allah will thy servant be placed."

Saadet found me looking more than usually well that morning. Poor girl! After all, could she guess what was on my mind! How tired I was of thinking; how weary of being afraid. "If only the tall *hanum* (my sister) could get better," she murmured, with tears in her eyes. And I, too, could hardly refrain from weeping as I replied, "Rest assured, dear Saadet, soon she *will* be well."

Ah, my poor sister! Far more than I she had suffered. It was when I looked into her poor sad eyes, the mirror of her wounded soul, that my whole being rose in rebellion, and there was nothing I would not do to



"SAADET, THE LITTLE SLAVE TO WHOM WE HAD BECOME SO VERY MUCH ATTACHED, BROUGHT ME UP MY BREAKFAST."

save her a moment's pain. She needed air, sunshine, and liberty; all were denied her. Another climate, another existence, might save her; in her own country she was dying. We had appealed to our supreme Calipha and his mother to let us go to Egypt (for no Turk can travel without Imperial permission), but every petition was refused. The Sultan looks with disfavour on the modern Turkish woman. Her education he considers dangerous. We were well aware of the fact that we were classed with the *révolutionnaires* and carefully watched by the secret police. Here was another obstacle in the way of our flight. Yet in spite of them all I determined to save her, she who had been the consolation of my whole existence. From that day onwards our *rôles* were to be reversed—she was to be the young sister, I the protector.

But to return to our preparations.

The night before the 18th January we had sent my sister's little slave to a cousin who lives on the shores of the Bosphorus with this message: "To-morrow we are coming to spend the day with you. Please expect us. If by chance you receive a telegram from our parents asking if we are there before our arrival, answer, 'yes.' We may be late." To this our cousin replied at once: "I cannot understand your message, but rest assured I will do as you wish."

Towards noon, on my last day at Constantinople, Djénane, our dearest friend, arrived and I managed to chat gaily enough, although each moment I was terrified that my emotion would betray me.

"Supposing we go to lunch with my sister," I suddenly suggested, and, delighted with the idea, we both went to ask my mother's permission to leave the house for two hours.

It was with no small emotion that I kissed my mother's hand for the favour accorded, and I turned back twice to look at her. Every moment I felt I must tell her all, and that it was good-bye for ever. Should I? No, no! that would be too foolish.

On leaving my mother's little drawing-room, to my utter horror I perceived my cousin's brother. A word from him to our mother and we were lost. Our plan, of course, was to let our parents imagine a telegram from our cousin, sent to my sister's house, had called us there unexpectedly; otherwise how could we absent ourselves from the house for twenty-four hours without awakening suspicion? Djénane was astonished to see me so confused at my cousin's simple question, "When are you going to our house?" "After lunch," I replied; "but please do not mention it to my mother," I added, in a low voice.

Then I went to my room, took a last look at all my treasures, put on my black skirt and *tcharchaff* (veil), and left my Turkish home—for ever. My sister's house was only a few yards away, and she was anxiously waiting for us. In I rushed, and, regardless of the fact that our friend did not speak French, I fell into her arms and, weeping bitterly, cried—"It is all over!"

We had intended to leave Galata by a little Bulgarian boat for Bourgas and thence by train, but during the morning I was informed there was a tempest in the Black Sea and the boat could not start. The only course was to take the train from Sirkedji, which started at eight o'clock that evening. But it was my cousin's visit that worried us more than anything.

"We are lost!" I repeated over and over again. "To think that the work of three years should come to nothing."

Our friend, seeing something was wrong, left us discreetly. Slowly and silently she glided out of the house and we made no effort to retain her. This was our good-bye and her reward for years and years of faithful friendship!

For some time my sister and I wept in silence, till the sound of the bell awakened us to the necessity of action. It was my cousin, he whom we had accused of undoing all our plans.

"Did you say anything to mother?" I asked. And with the frank manner in which he answered, "Of course not," we again began to hope.

We then explained to him that we very much wished to spend twenty-four hours with his sister, but, in order not to be refused, we were to let our parents know when we had already started. Our cousin laughed, and, in spite of himself, this kind-hearted boy became our accomplice.

"Send word to your parents that I have taken you," he replied; "in that manner you will not require servants to accompany you."

Nothing could be better. We had to go that day or not at all. The master of the house was to be detained till the next morning, and it was an opportunity not to be lost. All the servants and slaves had been sent on errands that would occupy them till evening, and our cousin, happy to be able for once to procure us the pleasure of going out alone, left us, saying he would see us again in a few hours.

Now it was good-bye. For the last time we visited every corner of the house in which my sister had spent three years of hateful captivity, then, tremblingly, we took up our little parcels, and calling a passing cab drove to the friends who were to help us in our flight.

Mme. S——'s house was at the other end of the town, and never, as it seemed to us, had we taken so long to drive there. The youngest daughter of the house was to accompany us on the journey, using her own passport, while I was to use her mother's, and my sister that of her elder sister, aged twenty. Now it was time for us to change our dress, leave behind our *tcharchaffs*, collect our luggage, and prepare for the journey. I was to be disguised as an elderly lady of about fifty. A box of powder was emptied on my hair and, with the aid of a burnt cork, I soon had a sufficient number of wrinkles.

On my grey hair, for the first time in my life, was placed *a hat*. This I had made myself with the springs of a broken chair and the velvet of an old blouse. My face was covered with a thick black veil; a skirt, mantle, and old white shawl completed the garb in which I had to face the Turkish spies and police at the Sirkedji station.

Never in my life shall I forget the moment when our passports were being verified. Why should I at that moment persist in thinking of the fate that awaited a certain Pasha's daughter when she attempted to escape? She got to the spot where we then stood, but was discovered, and from that day no one has seen her. "Eternal incarceration," I said to myself: "never, never!" and instinctively I touched the loaded revolver in my bosom.

One moment, while it seemed as if my legs were giving way under me, and our passports were pronounced correct. It is useless to attempt to recall the moments we passed before the train started. Imagine, if you can, our terrible state of nervousness! And we had yet to cross the Turkish frontier! Until then our lives were in danger.

During the twelve hours that the train whirled us away to Mustapha-Pasha, the frontier town where we had to stop, naturally not one of us closed our eyes. Supposing our parents had taken it into their heads to visit our cousins! Supposing they had discovered our plans! Here we should be arrested! Everyone seemed to be eyeing us with suspicion. What was that group of Custom-house officers discussing? Why did they look at us so curiously? Now they were coming towards us. Surely we were lost! And again I grasped my revolver.

But, no. It was simply to examine our luggage and verify our passports. "Mme. S——, Mlle. S——, Mlle. Yvonne S——, —*bien*," they replied in French, and to our utter astonishment they went away without asking another question.

At last the train started again. Continually we wiped the steam from the window and watched the scenery of our native land we were leaving behind us. We watched and watched until at last—a Bulgarian soldier was seen—we were saved!

Then, worn out with emotion and the fatigue of the journey, all three of us sobbed as if our hearts would break.

By the time we reached Sofia we felt so safe that my two pretended children left the compartment to buy some pictorial post-cards. Then it was I noticed how an individual, wearing a Turkish fez, looked at us, more than indiscreetly. Up and down the platform he walked, gazing at us all the time, then after a few moments I distinctly saw him walk into the telegraph office. The other two had not noticed him, and what was the use of telling them about the face that worried me the whole night?

"OUR PASSPORTS WERE BEING VERIFIED."

By five o'clock the next morning we were at Belgrade. "*Belgrade!*" Even now my hand trembles as I write the name of the Servian capital we had so longed to see.

"What is it?" we answered, as a loud rap was heard at the door of our compartment.

"Ladies, the police inspector requests you to alight here; he has received orders to arrest you."

Do not ask me to describe our emotion. It is over now. But how we managed to dress ourselves I cannot tell. Where were we going now? And what pitiful-looking objects we were! No wonder several persons had assembled even at that early hour to see three women leave the train accompanied by a Servian policeman and a Turk.

At last I ventured to ask our conductor where we were going.

"To the Turkish Legation."

"Never!" I replied. "On Servian soil, our business is with Servians. Therefore, be so good as to take us to an hotel where we can stay in safety."

"To the Grand Hotel," he said, promising us faithfully that no harm should befall us. Then he called a cab, and drove with us over the cobbled pavement of the dark streets to our destination.

At the Grand Hotel we were greeted by the same Effendi we had seen at Sofia, but now the Turkish fez had given place to a soft felt hat. He had come, he said, to see that we were taken care of, to invite us to breakfast, and to assure us we had nothing to fear from either Turks or Servians.

"That is all very well, Prince Mohammed Arslan," we replied, "but why have we been arrested?"

Then this gallant Prince showed us the Ministerial telegram in which "The Grand Vizier ordered the Turkish Legation at Belgrade to have three ladies with false passports arrested. Their plans were as yet unknown; they were in the hands of adventurers." This, of course, we denied.

A few minutes later, too, still in our hideous travelling garb (my clothes were covered with powder and my wrinkles had vanished), we received a visit from Fethi Pasha, the Turkish Minister, who, with gracious and diplomatic words, had "come to pay us his respects."

But we were not such easy prey as the little Pasha imagined. And the Embassy at Berlin was to be his reward for "bringing back two lambs to the fold." No, no; not as long as either of us were living!

Oh, how slowly the time passed in that hotel! What was there for us to do? How could we rest? Who was there to tell us what the future had in store for us? Whom could we trust? Who was there to protect us, we who had always been so carefully protected?

By eight o'clock the whole town seemed to be awake. For hours I watched the throng of people hurrying to and fro, a pleasure it seemed to me then of which I should never weary. We had seen so little of life through the bars of our harem windows, and what took place the other side of our high garden walls we could only imagine. Now, at last, we could see humanity: every creature seemed happy, for every one was free. Were they grateful, I wondered, for the one blessing for which we had left our country and our home—a blessing of which we had dreamed for years; for which, perhaps, we were to give our lives?

Prince M. Arslan came to take us to lunch

at noon. He was kindness itself. No one could have been more attentive, and again and again he apologized for having been obliged here at Belgrade to execute his duty.

Was he as perfidious as we had supposed, this gallant Prince? At times I felt ashamed of the manner in which we had scorned his attentions. The next afternoon, however, when he promised to take us for a long drive and show us all the beauties of the town, "so that our captivity might seem less unpleasant," we willingly accepted.

But on returning to our hotel my poor sister was again seized with one of those violent fits of coughing I knew so well. Towards evening she became so bad that we were obliged to send for a doctor. "Her condition was very serious indeed," he said; "Switzerland was the only place that could save her." Yet how was such a thing possible? Here we were stationed we knew not for how long, and no one seemed able to enlighten us. Perhaps Arslan would have some news for us the next day!

To our great astonishment, at ten o'clock that evening we received a visit from a lady, who refused to give her name, but whose face at once inspired confidence. "I have come to tell you on no account to leave your hotel to-morrow," she said. "Prince Arslan's idea is to trick you into the Turkish Legation." That was all. I thanked her with all my heart, and our unknown friend vanished as mysteriously as she had come.

At the appointed hour the next day Prince Arslan arrived to take us for the promised drive. Ah! how odious did his sympathy and kindness appear to me now. "On account of my sister's illness," I said, "we shall have to put off a pleasure to which we have been so looking forward." And, thanking him again, we said good-bye till the next day.

Never since the time we had planned our escape were we so discouraged as that afternoon. What was the use of continuing to struggle? Who was there to help us? We had almost made up our minds to resign ourselves to our fate when two Servian friends were announced—friends whom we had welcomed years ago in Constantinople and whose existence we had almost forgotten.

On hearing of our terrible plight they had hastened to come to our aid. They had heard a report that on account of the sympathy we had aroused amongst the people the hotel was to be guarded by the police the very next day. There was no time to spare. We had to leave the hotel that very night and after midnight. But could we? How was my poor sister to face that biting cold winter wind in the condition in which she then was?

"Yes, dress me; I will go," pleaded the poor sufferer. And as soon after midnight as possible we had left the hotel in company with our friends, and were driving miles away to this villa where we are now staying till my sister is well enough to continue her journey. Here we felt safe, and here at last we could rest. Here I have had my first long sleep since we left the land of Islam.

We have not yet made up our minds whether Switzerland or the Riviera is to be our destination. Now I hope our troubles are at an end, although, even as I write, that red fez on Belgrade station continually haunts me. I close my letter with a feeling of terror I cannot explain.

To-day, it is from Venice that I am writing to chronicle our safe arrival. Now, at last, all danger is past; here at least we are free, and no one can touch us. Yes, we are free, free as the bright blue sky and sea, which remind us of the far-off country we shall never see again. But have we not paid a terrible price for our liberty?

One day, perhaps, I shall write more details about our stay in Servia, but letters are too dangerous. What we suffered at the hands of our countrymen I cannot describe. Will they leave us alone now, I wonder? I doubt it; but I am so tired of thinking that my letters are becoming incoherent.

Even the magic blue sky and the lacey marble of the Doge Palace give me little joy; indeed, before this beautiful edifice we can do nothing but weep.

Free! Yes, here we are free, and our thoughts go back to our own land, to our parents, our brother and our sister. Never again shall we see their dear faces, and whatever happens we can never alter the deep affection we have for them. Much as we have suffered, on them we do not lay the blame, but on the harsh and cruel laws of our land. Free! Yes, free, we repeat over and over again. And in spite of what may happen in the future, at present we can smile. Of our own free will we left our country, and we are firmly resolved to bear all the consequences of our action.

The Call of the Tiger.

By E. L. White.

BILLIE'S thumbs were turned down. "Kill! Kill it!" she shrieked.

In front was the dilapidated wood-shed, criss-crossed with stacks of sweet-smelling timber. Above was the clear blue stain of a cloudless sky. The sun-baked ground was a scene of the wildest riot and disorder. Sawdust flew into the hot, quivering air as a swarm of rats, a couple of terriers, and two sunburnt men in flannel shirts doubled and cut, turning the yard into an arena of strife.

On the outer fringe of the conflict, poised on a log, were the two spectators of the rat-hunt. They formed a curious contrast. Belinda Salt, commonly known as Billie, the apple of her father's eye, the idol of the station, and the belle of the whole district, was quivering with excitement as she leaned, with her body poised at a dangerous angle, over the yard. An ecstatic puppy was tucked under one arm. Her clear skin was tanned, her eyes were fearless, and her hair a copper glory. The vitality that seethed from every line of her face and every gesture of her lithe form bubbled up constantly from a vasty reserve of energy. As her male belongings said proudly, Billie was full of ginger.

Her companion stood gazing apparently at the hunt with listless unconcern. As a matter of fact his eyes were steadily focusing a low line of blue hills in the distance. He was tall and fair, and had regular features. His face and figure bore testimony to race. His manner was stamped with the hall-mark of Eton and Oxford. His clothes, with silent but eloquent voice, rose up and called a good tailor blessed. He smoked a cigarette, apparently unconscious of his companion's clamour.

Billie's eager eyes watched every detail with vivid interest. Her upbringing was responsible for her crude tastes; for the girl's mother, by dying early, had turned her baby over to her men-folk and the universal mother. Between them they had made a good job of the girl's rearing, according to the broad terms of the contract—sun, wind, freedom, and masculine devotion all contributing their share. But while the essentials were sound, the details of necessity were lacking.

Billie jumped up and down, urging on the men with increasing vigour. So engrossed was she in the sport that she never noticed when the frantic pup slipped from her arm and joined the fray. But a piteous howl roused her, and she turned to see a huge grey rat hanging on to the white coat of her pet. With a cry of dismay she cried out to her silent companion.

"Oh! look, look! Mr. Tygarth—look! Be quick and get him. Quick!"

Tygarth never moved. Apparently he was absorbed in re-lighting his cigarette. Billie gave him one quick glance, but she did not repeat her appeal. Springing off the log, she dashed into the mêlée, to return a minute later with the puppy. Tygarth turned his head slowly.

"What's happened?" he asked. "I was just trying to get this thing to draw."

"I noticed you were absorbed," answered the girl. "This bad pup got loose, so I had to go to his rescue."

As she spoke she shook her hand impatiently, and Tygarth noticed that a small splash of red had speckled the sawdust.

"Good heavens! You've got a bite," he exclaimed. "Here, let me tie up your hand."

Billie looked him squarely in the eyes.

"No, thank you, Mr. Tygarth," she said, quietly. "I prefer not to trouble *you*. Forster will do it."

She called out, and immediately the hunt was suspended, both Dyke and Forster crowding round their queen in concern. As they bore her off between them to their universal remedy, the cold-water tap, Forster looked back to shout to Tygarth:—

"You should not have allowed this to happen. You want more eye-wash, young man."

But Tygarth remained motionless, sucking at his cold cigarette, his face absolutely devoid of expression as he watched the shadows drifting over the hills.

"BILLIE JUMPED UP AND DOWN, URGING ON THE MEN WITH INCREASING VIGOUR."

Tygarth came of a race of mighty warriors and hunters. From the first Tygarth, surnamed the Tiger, killing had been their occupation and pleasure. They killed men for work, and beasts for play. The Tiger now only survived on the coat of arms, and the savagery of the original strain had been watered down to a streak of the courage that had made the name of Tygarth famous.

The Tygarths had always been attracted by feminine courage, and had chosen wives of similar stern material. But one Lady Tygarth of an earlier day had been cast in a gentler mould, for, before her marriage, she was destined to be a Bride of the Church. Throughout her life she was an earthly angel, and when she died a feather dropped from her wing, and, floating down the ages, lighted on the forehead of the present Dennis Tygarth. From the very purity of its source it was the white feather, and Dennis Tygarth was utterly and hopelessly a coward.

His cowardice was as much a disease as insanity, or a craving for alcohol. It was deep-seated, its roots reaching down to the very rock-bed of Fear. Perhaps the worst feature in the case arose from the fact that not one of the Tygarths had the courage to acknowledge this failing in their heir, and to openly tackle it. They held their heads high, affecting not to notice the record of nursery, school, and college. Finally, they sent him abroad to the Salts' ranch, with the unspoken hope that the wilder life of the Australian bush might foster his stunted manhood.

Sandy-creek was a bad place for cowards. Dennis's nervous shrinkings from animals reached a climax of spasms of terror at the unknown insects and reptiles. But his fear culminated in the knowledge that one day Billie would find him out.

When he first arrived he was not popular. Billie complained that the Englishman's complexion was fairer than her own. Forster and Dyke, who were learning sheep-farming,

shied at his silk shirts and fancy ties. Dr. Beaver, who was staying at the homestead whilst he pursued a course of investigations, was the first to diagnose Dennis's disease. And he held his peace.

Presently Billie began to annex the newcomer, and the jealousy of Forster and Dyke grew apace. After a month, however, perplexity began to mingle with her friendship. With hard-set mouth, Dennis waited for the disillusionment of the girl whom he had learned to adore. Bit by bit the truth leaked out. Hints were dropped, and ugly rumours spread about the station. As Dennis's fair skin peeled daily under the rays of the Southern sun, so the outer scales of his armour of self-protection were rubbed away under the test of each fresh incident. With the unlucky episode of the puppy the last shred was stripped away, and the girl saw the pock-marks of the scourge which the youth had tried to conceal.

Tygarth waited by the creek, watching the muddy water eddy by, till the short twilight smudged the sunlit land. When the windows of the dining-room shone like glow-worms he slowly crept back towards the house. He heard shouts of laughter, and the clinking of glass and cutlery, as he stood outside the door. Then, stiffening his lip, he turned the handle and slipped into his place at the supper-table.

No one took the least notice of him but Daddy Salt, who stopped in his task of carving to exclaim at Tygarth's pallid face.

"Bless my soul, the boy looks like a boiled rag," he said.

Billie turned her scornful eyes on Dennis. He noticed that her hand was bandaged.

"No, Daddy, not like a boiled rag," she corrected. "He looks like a striped thing that has run in the wash."

No one could have told from Tygarth's sphinx-like face that he had grasped her meaning, but every pulsation of his heart hammered home the truth. His tiger stripes were not a fast colour.

"Let the boy have his supper now, and don't worry him," interposed the kindly Salt. "By the way, Tygarth," he added, "a letter came for you by the mail to-day."

As Forster passed the envelope down the table he commented on the crest. "Why a tiger?" he queried.

Bitterly conscious of the irony, Tygarth explained clearly and at length. When he paused he looked up, and noticed a grin dodging from face to face before his suspicious eye. Then Billie spoke, innocently.

"It takes a long time for a tiger to become a domesticated cat," she observed. "I suppose now, that as the Tiger, your ancestor, is at one end of the chain and you are at the other, by the process of civilization you must have become—er—humanized. In future I shall no longer call you Tygarth. Instead, from this day forward, I formally christen you —the Tabby."

Dennis tried to smile at the outburst of cheers that followed, knowing well that his new name was the outward sign of his degradation.

After that night an era of persecution began for the Tabby. Dr. Beaver and Daddy Salt, absorbed in their different interests, took no notice, but Billie, Forster, Dyke, and all the hands on the run daily subjected the Tabby to a pitiless course of ragging. Every day they contrived a fresh test for his courage, and every day his quivering nerves gave way before the ordeal and he gave a more thorough exhibition of cowardice. But, as of old, the same curse followed him. No one openly accused him of his fault. Had Billie spurned him with her foot and trampled on him Tygarth would have hailed her overtures with relief. All his life he had longed to speak of his shame, feeling the mere mention would take away some of the sting. But Billie preferred to give him his medicine in the old nursery fashion. A snub was wrapped in a smile, an insult larded over with flattery, while at the bottom of the jam of Billie's sweetest speeches lay the bitter sneer. Treated thus, with outward politeness, Tygarth preserved a stony countenance, which further enraged the Inquisitorial Council of Three.

One afternoon, as Tygarth wandered listlessly on to the veranda, longing for the pitiless Australian blue and gold to change to his native green, and dreaming of trout-streams, a familiar sound floated out through the open French windows. The rattling of china and the buzz of conversation, stabbed with high-pitched feminine notes of exclamation, proclaimed a social function. As he entered the drawing-room he realized that he was assisting at the rites of a formal call.

These were visitors of a different type to the chance pilgrims who dropped in lightly at any hour on the Salt *ménage*, and who flapped away as suddenly on the casual wing of an angel unawares. The lavish hospitality of which these strangers partook was now pared down to a frigid entertainment which Dennis hailed as English afternoon tea. Billie presided over the teapot with her usual

nonchalant air of dignity. But, true to feminine tradition, she had dressed for her own sex in a fashion she had never troubled to display to her male subjects, and as Dennis looked at her lace and flounces he felt himself subjugated anew by her queenly beauty.

A brief introduction enlightened him as to the identity of the visitors. The dry-skinned, wizened man, the large, gorgeous lady, and the two smart maidens stood revealed as Theophilus Berry, the richest squatter in the district, his wife, and his daughters.

With a sigh of relief Tygarth concerned himself with the transit of the tea-cups, feeling he had stepped from the savage region of the Southern Cross to his native sphere of the civilized world.

Billie noticed the change. Tygarth, answering to the call of his early training, was a different being to the cowardly youth who had cringed round the sheep-runs. Even the silk shirt and immaculate parting seemed now to take their right place in the general scheme of fitness, and appeared no longer a mixture, but a blend. For the first time the girl realized that two Tiger attributes—the steady eye and free bearing—had survived the watering-down process and chosen to reappear in this degenerate descendant.

Half cross with herself for her sudden interest, she glanced at her chosen pals, Forster and Dyke. They suffered badly from the contrast; as they squirmed their legs desperately to hide their uncompromising boots they appeared nervous and awkward. In short, for the first time Tygarth shone, solely from the fact that he now possessed what he had hitherto lacked—a fitting background.

The Hon. Theophilus Berry beamed at Tygarth and invited him to ride over soon. Mrs. Berry seconded the invitation, and also beamed—in a manner that was too maternal for Billie's taste, in view of the Berry girls' evident overtures of friendship. It was true that Ruby Berry's face was freckled to the semblance of a bran-mash, but Pearl was passably pretty, and had the further advantage of being fresh from a finishing school in Brussels. So, to her surprise, the despotic Billie found herself joining in the running, once the Berrys had fairly made the pace, and helping to swell Tygarth's little triumph.

But, after his long abstinence, the strong dose of flattery was as dangerous to Dennis as an over-lavish meal to a starving man. In a short time the unaccustomed kindness of Pearl Berry turned his head. Billie had treated him like a cur; now he would have none of her patting, and at the first opportunity he snapped back.

"It's a real treat to meet someone fresh from England," said Ruby Berry.

"It's a still greater treat to me to talk to a lady again," replied Tygarth.

The sudden sparkle in Billie's eyes asked the question framed by Miss Berry's lips.

"But you see Miss Salt daily?"

Tygarth shook his head. "Miss Salt is such an excellent sportsman, and has such wonderful courage and skill, that one overlooks the fact that she belongs to the weaker sex."

The youth uttered the words straight from a heart rankling with many an old wound scored thereon by Billie. He experienced the unholy joy of a small boy who has

"THE HON. THEOPHILUS BERRY BEAMED AT TYGARTH AND INVITED HIM TO RIDE OVER SOON."

thrown a snowball at a policeman, all unconscious that a stone was embedded in his soft pellet.

Billie felt that her supreme power, her feminine charm, had been impeached. She glared at Dyke and Forster with burning eyes and read their anger in their crimson faces, while even Dr. Beaver's listless eyelids appeared to be suddenly wired. By mental telegraphy the sentence of lynch-law was passed by common consent, and all settled down to the task of showing up Tygarth.

"Talking of sport," said Forster, breaking the silence, "our friend, Mr. Tygarth, has given us many a surprising—I think I may call them surprising—exhibition of his skill. You know, Mrs. Berry, he is too modest to tell you himself, but he is descended from a particularly bloodthirsty and courageous ancestor. He was called the Tiger. Our friend preserves the traditions."

Pearl's eyes grew wide.

"How splendid!" she said. "We miss that sort of thing in Australia. Then, of course, you came here for sport and excitement."

A suppressed laugh flickered round the room, and Pearl was surprised to see a faint colour rise in Tygarth's nonchalant face.

"No, no; nothing of the sort," he answered, hastily. "I came merely for health."

"I thought you looked a little delicate. But our climate and Miss Salt's care will make a new man of you."

"*That* would be an impossibility."

Even the Berry family stared at the note of scorn in Billie's voice. Mrs. Berry seized helplessly at the obvious explanation.

"Ah, she means you don't take enough care of yourself. That's like a man, especially an Englishman. You are all for sport. What is it you say? 'Let me go and kill something'!"

The colour ebbed from Tygarth's face as he waited for Billie's comment.

"You have just hit it," she said. "Once the excitement of slaughter is on him he thinks of nothing else. Why, I came home the other day with a bite on my hand as a result of his rat-hunting."

"How reckless of him!"

A shout of bottled-up laughter belled up from Forster's throat. Dyke and Beaver followed suit, while the Berry family stared in amazement. Billie had repaid her score with interest, but the china mask of Tygarth's face could not enlighten her to the fact that, false to the principle of true sport, she was hitting a man who was down.

"'TABBY,' SHE SAID, 'JUST RUN TO MY SITTING-ROOM AND PUT YOUR HAND INSIDE MY WORK-BASKET.'"

"Tabby," she said, lightly, "just run to my sitting-room and put your hand inside my work-basket. I have left a box of chocolates there."

"Why do you call him Tabby?" asked Pearl, curiously.

"I will spare his blushes," was the malicious answer. "Wait until he is gone and you shall have the whole story."

Only Beaver caught the look in Tygarth's eyes as he abruptly left the room, but it startled him by its strained intensity.

"She's driving that boy too far," he

reflected. "Like all young things, she is ignorant of her strength."

Directly the door closed behind him Billie faced her visitors.

"You ask why I call him 'Tabby'?" she demanded. "Because he deserves no other name. Because he is a disgrace to the race of Englishmen. Because he is a miserable, half-baked coward."

From behind the frail door Tygarth's burning ears heard a confused babel. Billie's words had called forth incredulous dissent on the part of the Berry faction, and vehement support from Dyke and Forster. He waited for Billie's clear voice to resurrect the first discreditable incident. Then he rushed down the passage in the direction of the sitting-room.

When Billie stopped at length in her recital, through sheer lack of breath, she saw she had wasted her eloquence, for the Berry family was apparently unconvinced. The girl appealed anew to her male belongings, but Mr. Berry shook his grizzled head.

"That's the smartest two-year-old I have seen out here for many a cold day," he said, dryly. "And I reckon, p'r'aps, an old man like me can size him up better than you fine bucks. We don't run against each other."

"That's about it, pa," chimed in Mrs. Berry. "These young men are jealous. Such a nice manner he has too. I will never believe him a coward."

"He is," flamed Billie. "I say he is; and I am not a man."

"But you are a girl, my dear, and apparently he has not grasped the fact," was the dry answer.

"He hinted as much," said Pearl, acidly.

Billie grew scarlet under the raillery of the Berry family.

"Very well," she said. "I will prove what I have said. I am not piqued because the Tabby has not noticed me. I would not look at him, for he is a coward. See now. I have sent him to my basket. Crusty, my pet lizard, always goes to sleep there every afternoon. He lives on my roof, and the Tabby has never seen him. Mark my words, he will think him dangerous, and have a fit, for he is the biggest and ugliest specimen you could find. Now listen. You will have to acknowledge me right."

"Suppose he should kill him?" queried Pearl.

A shout of laughter drowned Billie's reply. "Kill him? Not he—he hasn't the pluck! He dare not touch a rat. There, what did I say? Oh, listen, listen!"

She opened the door, and her visitors rose and stood, with strained ears, in a semicircle in the doorway. As they listened, from a little way farther down the passage and muffled by closed doors, came the sound of a cry of fear. Then followed strange confused noises, as if someone were furiously rushing round the room. A piece of furniture, apparently, was thrown over with a loud thud. The sounds died away after that, till the silence was shattered by the crash of broken glass.

An expression of doubt broke over the serenity of Theophilus Berry's hatchet face. He beckoned to the others.

"Get back to the drawing-room," he said. "We'll see this thing out. We'll be in at the death."

They had barely re-seated themselves, when the door at which they were all staring was thrown open, and Tygarth staggered in. The change in the youth was incredible. His face was flushed, and in his blue eyes burned a light of triumph. A bandage was tightly fastened round his wrist and his tie was crooked. He crossed over to Billie, lurching at every step.

"I've killed him," he shouted. "I've killed him."

Billie turned pale. "You have killed him?" she repeated. "Oh, how could you? You low, cowardly brute! You've done it for revenge. You've killed my pet. Oh, I hate you, I hate you!"

Tygarth's jaw fell as he listened to the vehement words. All the joy was whipped cleanly off his face.

"Your pet?" he stammered. "But—it was dangerous."

"Dangerous! It would not hurt a mouse."

"But it bit me," Dennis persisted. "Look!"

He pointed to his wrist.

Billie's scornful eyes flickered alertly over the stained bandage.

"Lies won't serve you," she said, instantly. "That's a cut; it is no bite."

A confused expression stole over Tygarth's face, and he rocked slightly.

Theophilus Berry exchanged a glance with Dr. Beaver.

"It's a cut," persisted Billie. "Done with glass, and from a broken bottle. You can't deny it."

"No, no; but——"

Dennis's voice trailed off into a mumble. All his strength seemed concentrated in an effort to keep his heels together; but it was

"TYGARTH STAGGERED IN."

plain by the beaten look on his face that not one of Billie's words missed its billet.

"Don't say another word," she commanded, sharply. "You must get up a little earlier in the morning to get the better of an Australian girl. I have eyes. Now, listen. To sustain your reputation for courage you have killed a perfectly harmless animal, and you couldn't even do that without Dutch courage. You have been drinking. You reek of brandy. You are not fit to be in a lady's presence. Go this instant, you—you—you *Tabby!*"

Tygarth turned on his heel. "Remember, I did it for you," he said, thickly. Then his head fell, and were it not for Beaver's arm he would have slid to the ground. With a nod to the doctor Berry slipped round to the other side, and, thus supported, Tygarth staggered from the room.

Directly he had gone a storm of voices broke loose. Reckless of her visitors, Billie prolonged the scene by bursting into tears—half in sorrow for her pet and half in anger against the Tabby. The Berry girls looked miserable and uncomfortable, while Dyke and Forster groaned for vengeance at every convulsive wriggle of Billie's shoulders. Mrs. Berry alone displayed a spasm of forbearance.

"My dear," she said to Billie, "you must not judge the poor young man too harshly. I have no doubt that such a state of nerves proceeds from ill-health. It's all diet, my dear. With proper feeding——"

"All the feeding in the world would not put one drop of red blood into his putrid, blue-blooded veins," growled Forster. "He is rotten, through and through."

Billie dried her eyes. "He did it for my sake," she said, faintly. "Did you hear his crowning insult? My darling Crusty!"

She spoke tenderly, yet even the sweetest cadences of a mourner's voice are powerless to quicken the dead or to explain the sudden resurrection that followed. For, at the sound of his name, a huge green lizard suddenly shot, with a ripping noise, up the reed curtain, and hung on to the cornice. With fascinated eyes, everyone watched him.

"Crusty!" screamed Billie. "It is—it is Crusty!"

For a few seconds all stood in a ring, worshipping the motionless reptile. Then Mrs. Berry's placid voice rippled through the ferment of excitement.

"What I want to know," she remarked, "is this: What did that young man really kill?"

Billie sprang to her feet. "Come along, all of you," she cried. "We'll soon find out."

They flocked out into the corridor in a confused heap, Mrs. Berry flapping along in the rear. As they passed one of the bedrooms they heard the sound of footsteps passing up and down. Berry's wizened face appeared through a slit in the door.

"Forster, Dyke, you two—come in here and lend a hand," he shouted.

The women rushed on into the sitting-room. It was in a state of disorder. A couple of chairs were overturned and a cluster of roses lay strewn on the matting. Billie's eyes went instantly to the bowl in which the flowers had stood, and she gave a faint shriek to see that the water was of a deep crimson colour.

But her cry was swallowed up in a yell from Mrs. Berry.

"Look!" she shrieked.

Something black was hanging from the basket. Ruby touched it lightly, and then recoiled in horror as it gradually slid to the ground. It seemed to the terrified women, as inch after inch slowly descended, that there was no end to the hideous spectacle. But at last, with a sudden rush, the whole weight of the creature fell with a soft thud, and they saw on the ground the carcass of a deadly swamp-snake. Its coils still twitched convulsively, but its head was crushed to the semblance of a flat-iron.

With a recollection of Billie's former outburst, Mrs. Berry instinctively produced her handkerchief. But Billie did not cry this time. She only repeated her former remark, "He did it for my sake." Then she added, slowly, "I have taunted him to his death."

"Nonsense, my dear," said Mrs. Berry, cheerfully, although she wiped her eyes, "the young man knew what to do. He took proper precautions, and acted promptly. This explains everything, blood, brandy, and all. They will bring him round all right. It will be a slight attack of blood-poisoning, perhaps, and after that, why, it will only be a question of diet."

But Billie waved aside all comfort. Her strained ears only heard the sound of footsteps in the adjoining room, that passed and repassed with measured tread.

The afternoon wore away. When the evening breeze was springing up the door of the room adjoining the sitting-room was slowly opened, and Theophilus Berry, pale and exhausted, limped out into the corridor. A shaft of red sunlight dazzled his tired eyes, so that he nearly stumbled over a little figure that was kneeling beside the door. Though white and limp, in her battered finery, he recognised his radiant hostess.

She looked up at his grim face, and saw that it was scored with the signs of a conflict waged against the Silent Adversary.

He regarded her sternly.

"You are to blame for this, young woman," he said, gravely.

Billie bowed her head in anguish.

"Don't tell me!" she cried. "Don't tell me Tabby is dead!"

For answer the old man drew out his large half-hunter.

"'THE TABBY DIED TWO AND A HALF HOURS AGO,' HE SAID, SLOWLY."

"The Tabby died two and a half hours ago," he said, slowly, "but the tiger in a man dies harder. Tygarth of Tygarth will live."

Which is the Most Interesting London Street?

A COLLECTION OF OPINIONS.

WHICH is the most interesting of all London's thoroughfares? Piccadilly, The Strand, Fleet Street, St. James's Street—which, if the six million dwellers of the Metropolis were put to a vote, would find itself decked with the most palms?

This was the question recently put by THE STRAND to a group of representative men, writers, painters, poets—all lovers of London.

"If," writes Major Martin Hume, the famous historian, "your reference to 'Metropolitan streets' included the great waterway of the Thames, I vote unhesitatingly for the river as the most interesting of London's thoroughfares. But if, as I fear, the choice is intended to be limited to streets on terra firma, then the very heart and centre of the vast City, whence its blood is pulsed to its far-flung suburbs in five counties, has my vote. Surely for historic memories and for present living interest no London street can vie with Cheapside. Other streets there are where the memory of one age is more vivid and concentrated, or where the human drama of to-day is more poignant than in 'Chepe'; but where do both elements of interest exist together to the same degree as there, where the crowd, busy and idle, is densest, and where from the time of Roman emperors to that of Edward VII. the pageantry of the proud capital has had its centre?

"Shut your eyes and imagine the wide, straight, rough-cobbled street, busy even in the far-off ages with the traffic of men. At the end of Bucklersbury the 'great conduit of sweet water' bringing the supply from far-away Paddington; then, in the midst of the street opposite Bow Church, the castellated Standard where many a poor wretch was maimed or judicially murdered for offences for which now a five-shilling fine would be considered excessive; then, farther on, opposite Wood Street, the towering Eleanor Cross; and, farther west still, the small conduit by Foster Lane.

"Think of the three days' joustings, when at the bidding of Edward III., in 1331, the chivalry of England, France, and Almain rode a-tilt in Chepe, crowded on each side by citizens and 'with a wooden scaffold erected across the street, like unto a tower, wherein Queen Philippa and many other ladies richly attired assembled from all parts of the realm to behold the joust.' Think of the 'Evil May Day' of 1517, when the London 'prentices, to the cry of 'Clubs! Clubs! Death to the Cardinal!' arose in Chepe against the alien immigrant, and to the dire risk of three hundred callow necks made of the great street a battleground. Think of triumphant Jack Cade, looking haughtily on, while at the Standard upon Chepe the noble heads of those who had

From a Photo. by] CHEAPSIDE. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY MAJOR MARTIN HUME.

opposed him were smitten off. Recall the long tales of pompous processions, which here reached their crowning triumph; the passage through the street of Catharine of Aragon, in white satin and gold in her litter of bullion tissue drawn by white palfreys; her russet hair loose and crowned by a flashing diadem; the City Guilds and Corporation in smart liveries welcoming her as their gage of peace by Bread Street corner, and every goldsmith's shop in Chepe ablaze with tapers around a figure of the blessed Virgin. Imagine again how a few years later her rival, Anne Boleyn—'that naughty pake Nan Bullen'—hated and feared by the citizens, passed on her way through Chepe nodding and becking for the cheers that came not, and greedily grasping the City's gift of gold that other Queens had bestowed at once in largess.

"Imagine the sad, pathetic figure of Queen Mary, her eyes wistful and red with weeping, showing the Spanish husband she loved better than her country or herself to the massed lieges packed between the Poultry and St. Paul's. Think of the entrance of Marie de Medici, of which a print exists, showing Chepe lined on each side throughout its length with stands, and guarded by the liverymen of the Guilds. Nay, to go further back, think of the poor Saracen mother of St. Thomas à'Becket, wandering through the busy streets with only two English words in her vocabulary, 'Gilbert, London,' seeking her faithless husband, whom she found at last hard by where in after ages stood the hospital to her saintly son's memory, upon the site of what is now the Mercers' Hall.

"Think of the wits of Shakespeare's time, with 'rare Ben Jonson' at their head, coining felicities at the Mermaid Tavern by Friday Street corner. Think of how Sir Thomas More and John Milton first saw the light of day in streets off Cheapside, and must there have passed in the wide artery the short play-time of their lives. Think of the great church of Bow, whose bells from the centre of Chepe rang back to fortune the errant Whittington.

"And then open your eyes and walk through the crowded streets to-day: Idlers always, from morn till night, challenge speculation as to how they live; busy people, crowned with care and bent by labour, awaken the wonder whether life can be worth living under such conditions. All nations, all colours, riches and poverty, vice and virtue, mortal tragedies and human farces, elbow each other along the pavement of Chepe; and I, at least, can find through thronging London no street that arouses in me such emotions of past and present as that great artery over which the sound of Bow Bells still floats, and to which the fine old plane tree of Wood Street still lends its rural touch."

"The street," writes Sir Gilbert Parker, M.P., the famous novelist, "which appeals to me most in London, chiefly, I think, because of the historical pictures which it conjures up of people and events, is St. James's Street. It has no beauty, but it has associations. If it is not as expressive of the life of the people as Mile End Road or Oxford Street, it is vividly expressive of the life of the nation, its power and its character."

This view is shared by Mr. Percy White, the brilliant author of "Mr. Bailey-Martin," who writes:—

From a Photo. by] ST. JAMES'S STREET. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY SIR GILBERT PARKER AND MR. PERCY WHITE.

"So far as I am concerned, feeling for London is chiefly one of association. The magic of places is begotten of this scarcely-definable sentiment. We ask ourselves, Who has walked down these streets? Who has lived in these houses? Thus, a personal atmosphere grows up round certain streets. Park Lane becomes a part of the great human comedy. In the Strand and Fleet Street something of our literary history assumes concrete shape. In spite of the builder changing old things with new and making away with landmarks which have become milestones, as it were, in our history, the Romance of the Streets should always remain in their names. No street, therefore, pleases me more than St. James's Street, with its dignified associations and comparative placidity. The ancient amenities still cling to it, nor can the roar of the Piccadilly traffic drive them away. To me it seems that, like Pall Mall, it has a street existence peculiar to itself; but if its life is in the present, it dreams regretfully of the past."

No one can speak with a more intimate knowledge of our great Metropolis than Mr. George R. Sims, who writes:—

"The most interesting street in London to me is the Mile End Road. From morning till night it is packed with pages from the Book of Life written in many European tongues.

"Here Asia jostles Europe and the dominant Oriental note carries you back to the Picture Bible of your childhood. Here are Abraham and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, Aaron and Miriam, the bearded Patriarchs, and the children of Israel, who have come through the wilderness to a Canaan that, if it does not flow with milk and honey for them just when they enter it, has promise of a golden harvest to be reaped in the fat years to come.

"The human panorama that unfolds itself night and day in the Mile End Road interests me so absorbingly that I have never yet looked up to see where the Mile End Road ends or begins. I pass into it from Aldgate and Whitechapel, and I wander it wonderingly till I come within sound of the bells of Bow that are not Bow Bells.

"Both the Ghettoes—the old Ghetto and the new Ghetto—pour strange streams of humanity into the Mile End Road. The English-speaking Jews are in the minority. Everywhere the world jargon of the Ashkenazim, which is 'Yiddish,' salutes your ear, and salutes it somewhat harshly if you have no familiarity with the German tongue.

"Most wonderful of all is the Mile End Road on a Saturday night when the Jewish Sabbath is over, and a brightly-dressed crowd of young Jewesses promenades with Oriental colours in their raiment, and Parisian *coiffures* under hats that to Parisians 'are unknowe.'

"You rarely see a sign of poverty or slatternliness among these young women, many of whom are only working girls.

"But it is not all festivity among the shows and stalls that line the roadway on Saturday night and make it a flaring fair. A large number of the business places open, the tailors and the shoemakers of the so-called 'sweating dens' renew their toil, and in the old-English houses that stand in long gardens at the Bow end you may see every floor aflare with gas, for these houses are now let out in floors to the fugitives from the Russian Pale and the Russian Pogroms, the Jews from Poland and the Jews from Roumania, and on every floor a different trade is often carried on.

From a Photo. by] MILE END ROAD. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY MR. GEORGE R. SIMS.

"Mile End Road is quieter in the week-day, but it is always wonderful — always a picture of many lands and an object-lesson in the pushing back of one race by another. The

Jewish note which dominates all along the Mile End Road ends almost suddenly when you come to Bow.

"There the land of your fathers begins again or rather still remains, for the unchanging East with its Bible pictures has vanished, and the English of 'Stratford atte Bowe' has a cockney twang in it that after the eternal Yiddish is not ungrateful in our ears."

"I am inclined," writes Mr. J. Ashby-Sterry, "to consider Bond Street to be the most interesting thoroughfare in London. In this I include the old and the new, although as you approach Oxford Street the interest sensibly diminishes. Only a few years ago there was a small private house, absolutely shopless, in the narrowest part of Bond Street, which I always regarded as the ideal residence for a Londoner of moderate tastes. The great charm of Bond Street is its dignified repose and its old-world flavour. Omnibuses are distinctly out of harmony with the surroundings, so are automobiles, and if the mobus should ever invade this select precinct I tremble to think of what might be the consequence. Not a little of the charm of this quarter is derived from the variety of the houses and their height being in due proportion to the width of the street. This gives an air of comfort to the neighbourhood, which is fast being removed from the rest of London, under the guise of improvement. Years ago I christened this thoroughfare Great Art Street, a cognomen that the many picture galleries and bric-à-brac shops seem to fully justify. Again, you will find all the tributaries of Bond Street, whether on the right or left, full of interest, and, if you are in a contemplative mood, you will be surprised to discover how the street itself is pleasantly haunted by the ghosts of the past. The fascinating Lady Hamilton, Lord Nelson, George Canning, Laurence Sterne, Sir Joshua Reynolds, David Garrick, Swift, Jackson (the famous pugilist), Oliver Goldsmith, Dr. Johnson, James Boswell, Byron, Tom Moore, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and Charles Mathews the actor, the father of the gifted comedian, whom many of us knew so well, are among the many notables as visitors or residents hereabouts. A good deal, too, might be said of the more recent inhabitants. I can recall the rooms of Sir Henry Irving at the corner of Grafton Street and the chambers of Corney Grain facing Burlington Street. I remember looking out of his window and suggesting that he should make Bond Street the subject of one of his admirable musical and humorous sketches, and I myself made an attempt to glorify the spot in verse."

From a Photo. by] BOND STREET. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY MR ASHBY-STERRY AND MR. HAROLD BEGBIE.

"Bond Street," exclaims Mr. Harold Begbie, the well-known author and humorist, "because of its amazing contrasts. There one sees the exquisite girl of fashion, the bloated, atrabilarious wife of Dives, the painted courtesan, the slip-slop milliner's and tailor's girl carrying her bundle, the fusty old caretaker, the cheeky errand-boy, the purple-faced, gout ridden old nobleman, the fresh-eyed, well-knit young dandy, the overdressed clerk, the lean and sombre professional man, the dusty labourer, the sponge, the pimp, and the tramp. The very vehicles enlarge this contrast. You may see, wedged between the glittering shops, a chariot and

From a Photo. by] WHITEHALL. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY SIR LAWRENCE ALMA-TADEMA, R.A.

pair, an electric brougham, a motor-car, a penny 'bus, a carrier's van, a donkey cart, and a coster's barrow, all jammed together in this narrow stream of dust and sunlight. I like it because there I realize most keenly the consolations of simplicity. I am happier tending to my herbaceous borders than looking into the shops of vanity and luxury. The needlessness of Bond Street adds a scent to my flowers and a greenness to the shade of my trees."

"For my own part," states the distinguished painter, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, R.A., "the most impressive street in London is Whitehall. I never see it without emotion. There King Charles I. perished; there so many historical events were enacted, so many pageants took place."

"Which is the most interesting street in London?" replies Mr. Tom Gallon, the "modern Dickens" of the literary world. "Well, the London of my boyhood, wherein I once wandered poor and shabby, has changed to such an extent that a number of the most interesting streets have been wholly swept away. But there is one which remains practically intact—and that is Fleet Street. Save in very small details, its buildings have remained unchanged, and its courts and alleys, and quaint old inns of the Temple and others, still remain what they were. It is, and ever must be while London is what it is, the great highway between the City and the dignified West-end; and of its literary associations it is not necessary for me to speak. Every man among the 'writing fellows' has won his spurs there in one fashion or another; to all of us who went there originally to pick up gold and managed to starve cheerfully in the process it is the street of streets. There is none other like it in the world."

From a Photo. by] FLEET STREET. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY MR. TOM GALLON AND MR. LAURENCE GOMME.

"My opinion for what it is worth," writes Mr. Laurence Gomme, F.S.A., former editor of the *Antiquary* and *Archæological Review*, "is the same as that of Lord Beaconsfield, namely, that Fleet Street (with the Strand) is by far the most interesting street in London. Down its slope my Celtic ancestors swarmed when their Roman conquerors took their stronghold in order to convert the site into Roman Londinium. Up its highest point my Saxon and Danish ancestors climbed to attempt the conquest, in their turn, of Londinium, and across its central part they formed their tribal settlement. At its early gateway—Ludgate, and its later bar—Temple Bar, Sovereigns have knocked to gain admission to the City. Along its pathway by the river my Lords of Essex, Norfolk, Salisbury, and others built their palaces, when lords were of the governing force of England. Up and down its pavements have walked Dryden, Pope, Swift, Johnson, Sidney Smith, Sheridan, and Swinburne, and it is still the home of the news-letter of to-day. On the top of an omnibus you may still discover new beauties, and you may always look upon a kindly, bustling humanity, not so keen on pure money-getting as in the City, but just as keen on the work they have to do. At its sides are courts and alleys innumerable—each with a history—and there is preserved amongst its houses (No. 17) what will one day, alas! be the only preserved relic of domestic architecture in London. I vote for Fleet Street."

From a Photo. by] PICCADILLY. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY MR. FRANCIS GRIBBLE AND MR. TIGHE HOPKINS.

"Fleet Street," writes Mr. Francis Gribble, the well-known critic and novelist, "has a certain melancholy interest, like that of a cemetery. So many really brilliant men, worthy of a far better fate, have gone under there, thinking mechanically in three paragraphs, and coming to make a sort of priggish religion of their anonymity. But on the whole my vote is for Piccadilly—and the Albany. One associates that address with so many young men who have looked upon the world as their oyster, and have really opened it."

"There are," writes Mr. A. St. John Adcock, the well-known author of "London from the Top of a 'Bus," "so many interesting streets in London that it is very difficult indeed to single out any one of them as more interesting than all the rest. For their historical associations I might prefer Whitehall, Whitefriars Street with its memories of Alsatia, Fleet Street or Tower Hill, Cloth Fair for its curious old-world atmosphere and the fine pieces of Elizabethan London that survive in it, a dozen other streets for a dozen other reasons. But after all the street that has the oddest fascination for me is Goodman's Yard, Minories. Not for what it is, but for what it has been. I like to walk through a few miles of wide, important, up-to-date thoroughfares, and then to go abruptly out of modern London by way of Goodman's Yard. It is nothing now but a squalid, ugly, rattling place of railway warehouses and offices, and the roadway is always crammed with lumbering vans and carriers' carts loading or unloading; but it was not like this when Goodman knew it and it was really his. There were meadows hereabouts then, and a nunnery and nunnery garden

From a Photo. by] GOODMAN'S YARD. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY MR. ST. JOHN ADCOCK.

near by, and there is such a magic in the name of that long-dead farmer that I have only to look up at it painted on the wall at the end of the street and say it to myself, and in a moment the vans and carts and warehouses vanish like a dream, and the farm is back in its place here on a summer day when the lark is in the sky, cattle in the green fields, and old Stow, the historian, climbing the stile, four centuries ago, and going up to the farm, as he often went on such a day, after a long walk, to rest there and gossip with Goodman and refresh himself with three pints of new milk at the modest cost of a ha'penny."

The Right Hon. Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bart., President of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and author of numerous historical romances, writes :—

"In reply to your inquiry as to which street in London I consider the most interesting, as an antiquary I naturally set most store by those which are most closely associated with the history of our country in the past. The leasehold system, business requirements, and modern hygiene have played so much havoc with the buildings and external aspect of our thoroughfares, that the street in which I find the greatest interest is not a street at all, but a place, viz.: Tower Hill. It is impossible for anybody acquainted with history to stand on this spot unmoved by the memories of the great, the guilty, the noble, the innocent, the unfortunate men and women who have suffered on this spot. In no other part of London is the difference between past and present—between tyranny and freedom—brought before one so vividly. The walls of William Rufus, abutting upon the foundations of the older Roman walls, are as ready as ever to receive and retain prisoners of state ; but there are no longer any prisoners of state. The throne of Henry VIII. stood firm, cemented by much of the noblest blood in England ; not less firm stands that of Edward VII., for it is 'broad-

From a Photo. by] TOWER HILL. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY SIR HERBERT MAXWELL, BART.

based upon his people's will.' The prospect from Tower Hill is an epitome of constitutional history."

"The most interesting street—to me," writes Mr. Arthur Morrison, the celebrated author of "Tales of Mean Streets," "that I ever saw in London was Ratcliff Highway in its old days. It is interesting still to those who remember it in its glory and can still detect the scattered and blackened traces of its ancient state. Otherwise it is rather dull.

"St. James's Street *is* interesting in another way, but until they began to break it to pieces I should have preferred the Strand. As things are, I have a prejudice in favour of Petticoat Lane, although they have been sadly interfering with that, too."

From a Photo. by] PETTICOAT LANE. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY MR. ARTHUR MORRISON.

Mr. Percy W. Ames, F.S.A., the Secretary of the Royal Society of Literature, writes:—

"The attractiveness of a street is partly due to the beauty of its present buildings and partly to its literary and historical associations, and to me the Strand appeals strongly as being the most richly endowed in these respects. The extensive alterations lately made have destroyed its old familiar appearance but not its interest. Its history is one of continual change from the days when bridges crossed the streams that flowed over it to the Thames. The houses just destroyed had themselves replaced others that had arisen on the ruins of the palaces which once almost entirely occupied it. The names of its streets preserve the memory of former days, and its Roman bath and the Savoy Chapel still remain; and the churches of St. Clement Danes and St. Mary are links with the remote past. The hotels and theatres will lose their garish newness and gather about them associations of human interest, and the old thoroughfare will always be the scene of gay pageants so long as London lasts."

"If Fleet Street," writes the Canadian historian, Mr. Beckles Willson, "be the brain and Piccadilly Circus the heart, then surely the Strand is the face of London. No street seems to me less cosmopolitan, more characteristic. I see in my mind's eye the long line of feudal palaces which gilded this historic link between the two great cities of London and Westminster; I think of the truly English pageants, cavalcades, and processions it has witnessed—at a time, too, when Piccadilly, Whitehall, and St. James's Street were but green fields; I linger amidst the landmarks of Angevins, Tudors, and Stuarts, and murmur with honest Evelyn when he saw King Charles go by: 'I stood in the Strand and beheld it and blessed God!' It is the homely Strand that so often first greets the English home-comer after his exile, and the look and the smell and the gentle roar of it brings the lump to his throat."

"I never groan for the London of the past," writes Mr. Tighe Hopkins, the well-known author of "Dungeons of Old Paris." "I do not wish to have lived in it. Plantagenet London looks delightful as Mr. Tree presents it in 'Richard II.,' but I crave no nearer acquaintance. Scenes that the eye of Shakespeare may have visited appeal to me through the poet's relation with them; but Elizabethan London was a dirty, dark, dangerous, and cruel town; and

From a Photo. by] THE STRAND. *[George Newnes, Ltd.*

SELECTED BY MR. PERCY W. AMES AND MR. BECKLES WILLSON.

approach to the days that own us the better, more delectable, and respectable a thoroughfare does St. James's Street become. Remotely I behold the evil swamp that is now St. James's Park. I traverse a period of time, and there arises in this noisome spot a dreadful hospital; and through the trees I hear the 'cup and clapper' with which the leper makes his dismal sound for alms. Somewhat later that bloated character, Henry VIII., invades these muddy fields, and a palace and a great game-warren are begun. The street itself that stretches from the palace has some very choice associations. Here, but some two hundred and odd years ago, was a Duke of Ormond, within sight of his doorway, hauled from his carriage by Colonel Blood, and whirled away to Tyburn, only to be rescued at the very foot of the gallows by a posse of his Grace's footmen. The gaming hells of this thoroughfare are eminent in the annals of the dice-box; and in the gardens of White's chocolate-house your sporting highwayman would throw his main before he mounted his nag to jog down Piccadilly towards Bagshot. For my own part, I chiefly love these memories when I jog down Piccadilly (to me always the most attractive street in London) on a 'bus, and know that no highwayman will ever frighten me out of my seven senses, and that, when my turn comes to climb the gallows, it is not by the hand of a private foe that the noose will be adjusted.

"For a score of reasons, then, I am on distant and more or less uncivil terms with picturesque antiquity. I like a clean air, drainage, a pavement, a good hotel, a better restaurant, lamps after nightfall, a cabman who is my friend, a policeman convenient at the corner, and shops filled with the mysterious raiment of the woman who perpetually lays my heart in ashes. These aids to life are modern, and I exchange the past for them without a murmur."

Shakespeare, penning his lines on the quality of mercy, was probably listening to the mob that screeched in the wake of a hurdle on which someone was being dragged to be disembowelled at the gallows. Concerning all these spacious days, the illusions that remain with me are few.

"It is easy to view with reverted eye any chosen arena of the 'romantic past'; but grateful or edifying it is not. For myself, I want all the historical perspective I can get. And my liking for historical perspective rests on this—that it shows us things, not in the very least as they were, but as it pleases us to think they were—or should have been.

"I can item down many of the ambiguous glories of the past without an affectation of regret at having missed them. In books, indeed, the glamour is not lost upon me. The Bagdad of 'Arabian Nights,' the Rome of Benvenuto Cellini, the Venice of Casanova, the Paris of any pre-Napoleonic era: these tall cities of renown I visit very gladly in my slippers of an evening, by a silent autumn fire; but it rejoices much more than it distresses me to reflect that I never owed rent or was beheaded in any of them.

"And there is not, I will own it, one historic street of London in which, in its historic epochs, I would willingly have dwelt. Is St. James's the most interesting? 'Hit mout be,' observes Uncle Remus of some other recondite question, 'an' den agin it moun't.' Certain I am, however, that the closer we

THE STRANGER'S ROOM.

By Winifred Graham.

I.

SPRING had returned, but the invalid could only feel it through the soft rays of light which played upon her sofa in the private sitting-room of a big London hotel. No budding trees could be seen from the window, which overlooked a broad terrace of houses. She purposely lowered her eyes, as if to avoid the eternal view of bricks and mortar. The consciousness that the natural world was waking to life in the country lanes sent a thrill of strange longing through her heart.

London seemed such a wilderness to the friendless woman who had come to the busy City, a widow from far Australia, little dreaming she would be kept a prisoner there for weeks by a sharp attack of unexpected illness.

She was thinking how many souls were gathered under one great roof, each a closed book to the other—their hearts, their joys and sorrows, their very names a mystery. Often in her lonely hours the strange riddle of life would range itself before her fancy, like a problem which no amount of contemplation could ever solve.

"I wish," she thought, "oh, I wish I could see something of the spring."

Even as this note of yearning struck its chord in her tired breast, the door, which had been left ajar, burst open with the violence of a March wind, and a large red ball bounded into the room. It bounced on to her sofa like a live thing, and rolled down across her knees to a settled position in the waste-paper basket. The unceremonious entry of the ball was followed almost immediately by a breathless little boy.

He stood looking round, not heeding her or the unfamiliar apartment, but just seeking his missing toy with the deep interest of childhood.

Before he spoke she had time to note his features and general appearance. Suddenly it seemed as if her wish were granted: the spirit of Spring had entered the room. Surely, in those round dancing eyes, the blue of summer seas, twinkling under the shine of the sun, might easily be recognised. The freshness of April flowers had some near relationship to the delicacy of his skin. The joy of new-born life in the frisking lamb reminded her of this small person's swift movements and innocent expression.

"You will find your ball in that basket," said Mrs. Verity, pointing to her feet.

"Oh, thank you," he gasped, and in a moment both little hands had seized the prize.

"HE STOOD LOOKING ROUND, NOT HEEDING HER OR THE UNFAMILIAR APARTMENT."

"May I look at it?" she asked. "Will you bounce it again for me?"

The genuine interest expressed by her manner awoke the child's confidence. He little guessed how much alone she was, how eager to detain the bright sense of youth which his coming brought to her prison. His tongue was unloosed by these friendly advances; he drew nearer with the ball in his arms.

"I was kicking it up and down the passage," he explained. "Mother brought it home last night. I think, if you liked, I might nearly bounce it to the ceiling."

"Well, perhaps it would be a little dangerous with the electric light, and I think we had better just play gently. I have been ill, and the doctor hasn't allowed me to play any games for a long, long time."

She noticed to her surprise a sudden clouding of the boy's face, a quick look of sympathy she had hardly expected from one of such tender years. He came close up to her, and laid his small hand upon her sleeve.

"Of course, I know all about you," he said, with a wise little nod. "The maid told Miss West—she's my governess—and Miss West told mother, and we all tried to keep very quiet, and shut our doors gently. That was some time ago, or I shouldn't have been playing in the passage. We've been here nearly a month, while our house in the country is being painted."

"It was very kind of you about the doors," she said, drawing down the merry face for a kiss. "I hope you did not find it very tiresome."

"No, I didn't," he answered, after a moment's consideration; "but mother thought it was a bother, because she plays the piano, and it stopped her practising. Oh, she was wild sometimes. She said people had no right to be ill in hotels."

The simple repetition of words was spoken with all a child's love of truth and ignorance of harm. It was easy to guess he had not the slightest idea his words might wound.

Mrs. Verity turned her head away and remained silent. She had that odd, ethereal sensation of belonging to another world, which comes with great weakness.

Presently she found her voice again. It was a relief to see the child appeared perfectly happy and made no attempt to go.

"Do you like Miss West? Is she kind to you?"

He beamed and nodded, rolling the ball over and over in his arms.

"She's only got me in the world, she says, so we have to be great friends. She has no father or mother, or brothers or sisters—or anything, except Bumble; I gave her Bumble last year."

"Who is Bumble?"

"A Persian cat; but he's ever so selfish at times, and when the birds are nesting he catches the young ones, and then we simply hate him. I tell Miss West that soon I shall be seven, and have to go to school; then she cries. Do you know how it feels to cry?"

"Yes, I know."

"Bijou, my dog, is ever so much nicer than Bumble. She is here with us. She won't eat if we leave her behind. She belongs to me; she's my very, very own."

Mrs. Verity listened to the little scraps of news prattled out casually, but they woke her interest, possibly because it was so long since she had been able to be interested in anything. The child had brought a glimmer of life and novelty to the lonely couch, and a fellow-feeling for Miss West stirred in the heart of the widow, who also had "no father or mother, or brothers or sisters—or anything." She sighed to think she did not even possess a selfish, bird-eating Bumble, who might at times consent to purr in her arms.

"Some day you must let me see Bijou," she said. "When I am stronger I mean to get a little dog to love, because I am rather alone in the world, like—like Miss West. Please tell your mother that I shall hope to hear her playing now that I am better; the sound of music does not worry me at all."

Even as she spoke a girlish voice sounded in the corridor.

"Lorry! Lorry! Where are you, Lorry?"

"That's Miss West calling me."

He ran to the door and peeped out.

"I'm here," he whispered, and dodged back.

A young girl, slender, graceful, and *petite*, looked in timidly, her large, dark eyes speaking apology.

"Oh, Lorry," she exclaimed, "what are you doing here? Please forgive him," addressing Mrs. Verity; "he wanders about and talks to everybody."

"And is welcome everywhere, I have no doubt," answered the invalid, smiling. "Convalescence is a very trying time, and my little visitor has proved quite a tonic. Won't you come in and sit down? I have no one to talk to, and Lorry has been cheering me up."

Miss West advanced shyly. There was a certain bewitching prettiness about her, combined with a supreme unconsciousness of her physical attractions. Mrs. Verity thought of

their mutual loneliness, and the days not so far distant when Lorry must go to school. It was the first effort she had made for others since her illness, this seeking to know more of the young governess with the speaking face and small, daintily-formed features.

The fanciful woman on the couch liked to imagine that with the entrance of Miss West early summer had come into the room, a summer of hope and love, when the fair childhood of spring blossoms into deeper tints, and the flowers have a stronger scent, and the sunshine is less variable. The girl's manner suggested the calm and beauty of a June day in some still garden, where the roses smile from dawn to sunset. Sweet visions floated before the eyes which so lately had been veiled by pain—quiet stretches of daffodil-starred turf, meadows of silver narcissi, harvest fields, refreshing mounds of newly-mown grass. Among all this she pictured herself as a one-flowered thistle on a rocky steep, a childless widow, alone in a sunny world, seeing in youth the emblem of her own treasured past, loving youth for youth's sake, and the exquisite thrill which memory gave, out of a store of gold.

Lorry brought her back to the present.

"You have not played ball with me yet," he said, casting a doubtful look towards the round white globes, shaped like water-lilies, in which at night-time the sharp threads of electric light curled in circles of hard, uncompromising radiance.

"'DO YOU LIKE GOING TO SEE THE KING?' ASKED THE CHILD, SIMPLY."

II.

MRS. LORAINE stood before a long mirror, regarding her reflection critically. Beside her stood Lorry, gazing at his mother's tall figure. He saw in her a woman of queen-like beauty, dressed like a queen, it seemed to him. On her head she wore soft white feathers from which a long veil floated, and, fastened to her shoulders, a Court train of great magnificence displayed a perfect forest of gold embroidery and coloured flowers upon a ground of gleaming satin, white as newly-fallen snow.

"Do you like going to see the King?" asked the child, simply.

"Yes, dear." She bent down to the small flushed face and held it a moment to her breast.

"Tell me, Lorry, what did I hear from Miss West about your straying into a stranger's room this morning? You really mustn't wander away like that. Remember, all the rooms on this corridor are private."

"My ball opened the door and took me in," he explained. "Presently Miss West came, and we stayed quite a long time. The lady gave me a message for you. She says she is much better, and you are to use the piano again. I told her it was such a bother for you not being able to play."

Mrs. Loraine's blue eyes—bluer, if possible, than the boy's—opened widely. "Lorry, you didn't tell her I said it was a bother?"

She put the question haltingly.

He flushed at the tone, wondering what he had done wrong.

"I—I only said people had no right to be ill in hotels, and that you didn't like not practising."

"You repeated my words? Oh, Lorry, how could you?"

Her reproachful voice brought a lump to Lorry's throat.

"Did it matter?" he asked.

"It's like this, Lorry. People often say things they don't mean—at least, I know I do—and then, when they are repeated, they sound horrid. As if anybody could help being ill! And, of course, I was very glad not to play—really. Poor thing, how you must have hurt her feelings! Perhaps she is very sensitive. Little unkind remarks wound so much more when you are weak. Oh, dear, what can we do to put it right?"

Mrs. Loraine looked distinctly worried. At heart she was one of the kindest women imaginable. Through her training, all that was sympathetic in Lorry had been developed to the fullest. Every tender instinct received encouragement. She brought him up to be bright and fearless, while the natural sweetness of his disposition lent itself to her influence.

A cloud passed over the child's face, sunny April changed to sudden storm. The pale woman on the sofa, the good friend who had bounced his ball and laughed as he caught it, was hurt in reality, and by his careless words. How could he atone? His mother had said they must make amends. What could they do to put it right?

"If I might give her something," he mused. "She is too old for toys, and I've nothing else—except——"

The last word broke from him as the small black body of a pug rose lazily from the sofa, and stretched luxury-loving limbs.

"Except Bijou," he added, in a smothered undertone.

Mrs. Verity's words flashed back. He repeated them slowly to his mother:—

"'I mean to get a little dog to love' (the stranger had spoken so sadly), 'because I am alone in the world, like Miss West.'"

"You can give her Bijou, if you like, Lorry."

Mrs. Loraine made the remark apparently with all seriousness. Her creed of fostering unselfish instincts in the boy was ever uppermost in her mind. She knew well that a stranger could hardly accept such a gift from a child, for Bijou had taken prizes, and was a valuable aristocrat in the world of pugs.

To the boy Bijou was dear for her own sake. He loved her because of the warm lick she bestowed on his kind little hand, not for the sleek beauty of a shining coat, or the inner blackness of her mouth. She ran at the sound of his voice and leapt on his knee; that was enough. Human love he gave her in full measure for the canine affection she bestowed on him. They mutually received, each responding to the other, child and dog in close mysterious communion.

"Yes," continued Mrs. Loraine, "it's a good idea. Bijou will be such a companion. You have your health and strength, so you can quite well give her up to Mrs.—what is her name?"

"Verity."

"Ah, I remember."

Lorry went slowly over to the dog, just preparing to settle down once more among the cushions. He caught her up with a little gasp and held her black nose close to his face.

"Bijou," he whispered, "did you hear what mother said? Mother always thinks of the right thing. I'm so strong, you know—so strong." He blinked back his tears manfully. "Miss West has Bumble, and Mrs. Verity won't feel so bad if she gets you to keep her company. Perhaps you will not quite like it at first; but oh, Bijou, I don't think it's so hard for you as it is for me, because you won't know you have gone for always; you will expect me back; you will listen for my whistle."

Mrs. Loraine watched the boy's curly head bending over Bijou, and caught the low, caressing tones in which he addressed his favourite. She felt half inclined to tell him that perhaps Mrs. Verity might decline the offer of the black charmer, only she wanted the boy to make amends for his thoughtless words of the morning. She little guessed how deep were his feelings, though she could see he was struggling with himself. Had she not believed so firmly in the early training of character, she would have held him to her, just as he held Bijou, and laughed away his fears.

"Miss West asked if she might go and sit with that invalid lady, so you will find her there now," said Mrs. Loraine. "No time like the present, Lorry. Why not take Bijou to Mrs. Verity at once?"

His eyes grew larger; the dark pupils seemed to expand and swamp the blue. Mrs. Loraine's imposing figure in the dazzling embroideries faded from sight, blotted out by a mist of unshed tears.

"Yes," he said, moving forward unsteadily, with Bijou in his arms, "I will go now."

He groped for the door-handle, and, with those blinding raindrops still before his eyes, ran down the passage, which had been made so merry only that morning by the bouncing of a brightly coloured ball.

This time he tapped at the door, hoping Mrs. Verity would not answer. His heart sank as he caught the ready "Come in."

A very dejected little figure walked to the couch, with Bijou clasped tightly to a breast which throbbed with agitation. Miss West saw at once that something was wrong; but Mrs. Verity, looking with eyes of admiration at Bijou, stretched out welcoming hands, in happy ignorance of the child's sorrow. He

"MRS. VERITY, LOOKING WITH EYES OF ADMIRATION AT BIJOU, STRETCHED OUT WELCOMING HANDS."

settled the dog down comfortably in the bend of her arm; and Bijou, accustomed to society, made herself quite at home, to the evident delight of the stranger.

"It was so kind of you to remember I wanted to see the dog," she said, warmly, with a glow of life in her face, which made her look quite different to the pale, wan woman he had seen earlier in the day.

The boy stood beside her, a brilliant flush burning in his cheeks. He fixed his eyes upon Mrs. Verity, yet seemed to be looking right through her at some vision beyond—picturing, possibly, his life when this little playfellow with the cheerful bark would no longer scamper at his side. He hesitated as if unable to put into words the drift of his thoughts. Presently she noticed his confusion, and asked if anything were the matter.

"It's—it's about the piano," he stammered. "You see, that was my mistake. Mother did not want to play at all."

He paused, then pointed to Bijou with a trembling finger.

"Mother is so sorry you are ill, and she has sent you our pug as a present."

"But Bijou is your dog. You told me she was your very own."

"Yes," he faltered; "but it's my idea, too. I brought Bijou on purpose to give her to you."

Miss West looked anxiously from the woman to the boy, knowing well the devotion Lorry lavished on the dog. Mrs. Verity read the look on the girl's transparent face and smiled.

"Lorry," she said, "I do really believe you would make this self-sacrifice for me."

She had caught both his little hands, and now she held them firmly, gazing at the quivering lips.

"Of course," he stammered, and turned his head away.

"It's such a long time," she continued,

"since anyone loved me enough to put self aside. I used to think the world was a wintry place, all hard and frozen——"

"With slides?" he queried.

"Well, slippery places, which bring the older people to the ground, while the younger glide over them and laugh as they slide along the smooth surface. To-day the spring has come—the spring of kind hearts and sunshine. I am going to get well very quickly now, because sickness is not in keeping with the fresh beauty of spring. It is at this time of year the baby birds arrive, and sometimes I like to imagine that thoughts are birds, which stretch their wings and fly out on the air. One that is quite big and important has been born to-day."

"Out of an egg?" he asked, eagerly.

Mrs. Verity ignored the interruption.

"The thought concerns you, Lorry. You were telling me this morning that Miss West would be very much alone when you go to school. But now she has promised to come and be my companion, because we have something in common—we both know how it feels to cry. It strikes me that Miss West will do instead of Bijou. What do you think?"

The child's face grew radiant, his eyes danced like sunbeams.

"That's the best thought ever hatched out of an egg!" he cried, delightedly, once more gathering Bijou into his arms, and kissing Mrs. Verity with the warmth of newly-awakened gratitude.

As she returned his caress another figure appeared in the doorway, the form of a woman clothed in rich brocade, with mauve and gold embroideries, and a magnificent bouquet of orchids.

"It's mother," cried Lorry, excitedly. "May she come in?"

He ran and drew her forward, dropping Bijou, who capered at his heels.

"You'll never, never guess, mother, what has happened," he exclaimed. "Bijou is all my own again, and really, you know, Miss West will be more of a companion, because she can talk."

The three women laughed mutually. To Mrs. Verity the sight of Lorry's mother was like the coming of a lovely butterfly, the crowning touch of the spring day. She saw charm in the fairy film of lace, the sheen of silk, and the rich brightness of brocade, but above all else the kindly gaze, the friendly handshake, and the eager explanations were the things that mattered. Friendship was there, and the love of a child's heart, while lingering in the atmosphere Mrs. Verity still felt the thrill of Lorry's sacrifice—offered at a stranger's shrine.

"HE RAN AND DREW HER FORWARD."

The Story of a Weed of Eminence: The Wild Chamomile.

By John J. Ward.

Author of "Minute Marvels of Nature," "Peeps Into Nature's Ways," etc. Illustrated from Original Photographs by the Author.

Fig. 1.—The wild chamomile at home—thousands of plants with branches two or three feet in height, and all more or less covered with yellow and white daisy-like blossoms.

THE wild chamomile is a most accommodating plant. It only needs the slightest introduction to make itself most comfortably at home. I well remember its advent in a field at the top of the lane. A season or two back the farmer cultivated this field with swedes, and it was then that the chamomile got its chance. How the first seeds came there I am not prepared to say; most probably they came with the seeds of the root crop, for there are no other fields in the near vicinity that, to my knowledge, offer friendly shelter to this weed. Or, it may be, a bird had been feeding on the seeds at some distant spot and flew down into this field one wet day, bringing a single seed adhering with a little mud to one of its feet. That would be quite sufficient, provided the seed had a little open space in which to make a start; the chamomile would do all the rest!

The farmer at first was lenient; he found the weeds growing apace and bundled them outside the gate into the lane on the rubbish heap. Now, if there is one spot on the earth that the chamomile loves it is a rubbish heap. There it will hold up its blossoms to the sunlight from the end of May until the end of October, or even November; so presently that rubbish heap presented to passers-by quite a glorious display of white and yellow blooms, and, although school children treated them unmercifully, the plants flourished and never failed to show an ample store of blossoms.

This year, for some reason, the farmer has neglected his field entirely, and the chamomile, spying out the land from the top of the rubbish heap, was not slow to recognise its opportunity. That, at all events, is my conclusion, and you would probably agree with me if you could see that field now. I have endeavoured to show you a small corner of it in the first illustration.

In the sunlight the field presents a verit-

able sea of daisy blooms. There they stand, thousands of plants, with branches two or three feet in height, and all more or less covered with blossoms. You will notice, too, that they hold the field; no other plant grows amongst them. It is true that some straggling and sickly-looking groundsel, and still more sickly-looking dock, may be found low down, but their days are numbered. This, indeed, is a plain case of "survival of the fittest"; for, although you may not know it, this wild chamomile weed comes of a very dominant family of plants, a family that stands at the head of the vegetable kingdom, just as man stands at the head of the animal world. But, you may say, there are oak, elm, and pine trees; surely these must come before such simple and insignificant weeds of the field. Then I may make reply that there are elephants, whales, and other huge living animals, to say nothing of the greater monsters whose fossil remains record their earlier existence, but, nevertheless, in relative development man is far superior to all these, and much more highly evolved. Indeed, for such comparisons size can be no criterion whatever. This is well illustrated by the fact that the highest amongst British animals is the bat; these little, weird, nocturnal animals rank next to man in the mammalia of this country.

In view then of the fact that the wild chamomile is one of the leading and therefore one of the most successful plants in the vegetable kingdom, it should prove interesting to consider a few details of its history, especially as these details throw considerable light on its success in life, and show how it came to hold such eminence in rank. However, before going farther I had better say that there are other plants very nearly related, such as the familiar ox eye daisy (Fig. 4), the yellow corn marigold, the feverfew chrysanthemum, and similar plants (not forgetting the common field daisy), which are just as successful in life; and what I write here concerning the chamomile may be applied (allowing for insignificant differences of detail) in a general way to all such plants—that is, to plants that bear daisy-like blossoms.

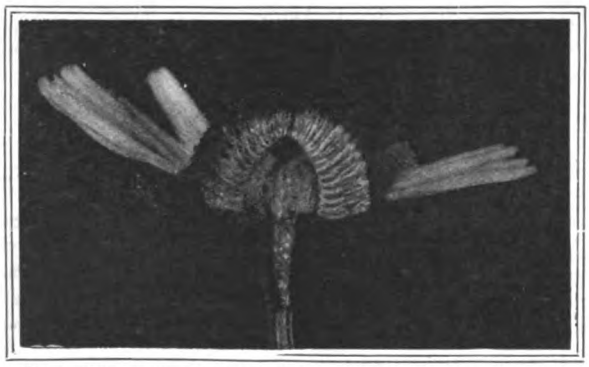


Fig. 2.—The blossom sliced through and magnified about four diameters.

Yes, the secret of the daisy tribe's success is, doubtless, the daisy-like form of its blossoms, and please note that I said "blossoms" and not "flowers"; because I want now to show you that a daisy is not a flower. It is, however, a most artful simulation of one. You will understand better what I mean if you will take the trouble to pull to pieces the next buttercup, dog-rose, or bramble-flower you happen to meet with. Outside the coloured petals of these flowers you will find (1) some protective leaf-like green sepals, (2) inside the petals numerous-stalked stamens, which produce the fertilizing dust known as pollen, and (3) a central part, occupied with the ovaries, in which the seeds are matured after the fertilizing pollen from the stamens has reached them.

Now dissect in a similar manner a chamomile, or some other daisy-like bloom, and you will soon discover that things are very differently arranged there. The green "sepals" of these "flowers" are numerous and closely packed around the base of what seem like petals (what they are we shall learn later), but then comes a rounded central mass of tiny objects which we see are quite unlike the stamens and ovaries of our buttercup or bramble-flower. Hence, although the chamomile daisy appears to resemble other flowers, if we try to compare it with, say, a buttercup, or, in fact, any ordinary single flower, we find a very great difference in structure; and no wonder, for if we had eyes that would magnify a few diameters we would then realize that in each daisy there are really several hundreds of flowers, all very orderly arranged, and nearly all of them possessing the various organs found in the bramble or buttercup flower. Now, the way out of the difficulty of understanding the chamomile is to use a magnifying lens, for the blossom measures little more than half an inch across, even when fully expanded, and in this space there are hundreds of flowers each as perfect as a buttercup, or

even more so; but on this point more anon. Now, lest you may think it too great a trouble to dissect such tiny flowers as make up the daisy bloom I will do it for you. I will dissect a blossom and photograph it through my magnifying lens, and so show you by direct photographs the actual thing while you sit in your easy chair. If, however, you are feeling any regret that you are unable to examine the actual flowers because you are not accustomed to dissect such small things and to use a magnifying lens, let me advise you to go into your garden and cut a large daisy — one about a foot in diameter. Pray do not look so startled. You, doubtless, grow sunflowers, or, at least, know where they are grown, and, of course, these are only very large daisies; and, in these large forms, the numerous flowers are big enough for you to examine with the unaided eye.

In Fig. 2, on the preceding page, is shown my chamomile bloom sliced through and slightly magnified, and you will note that in the centre is a hollow conical space, and that from the walls enclosing this space spring numerous little short tubes, all very closely and systematically arranged. I now select four of these little tubes, one from very near the top of the rounded mass, two others from successively lower levels, and finally one from the lowest layer; and in Fig. 3 you will see these further magnified and arranged in their relative positions.

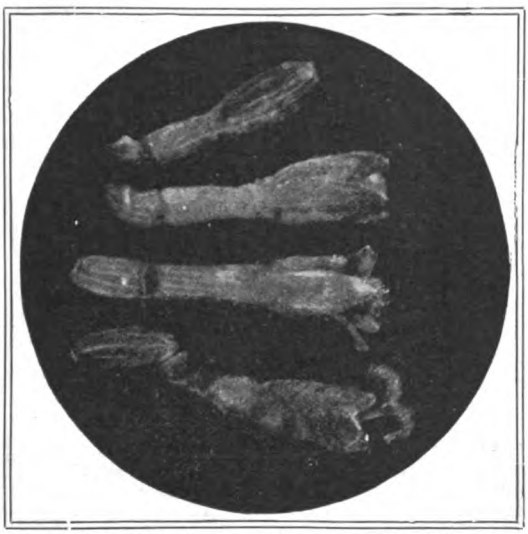


Fig. 3.—Tiny tubular flowers, or florets, from the yellow central mass of the chamomile daisy, in various stages of development—at the base of each is the seed—magnified twenty diameters.

Now, I may tell you that each of these little central tubes represents a single flower, or floret, of the chamomile; each is as truly a flower as the rose is the flower of a rose tree, as truly a flower as that produced by the buttercup, bramble, or dog-rose we have previously spoken of; in fact, they constitute an altogether higher and more advanced type of flower than either of the larger flowers mentioned above, as I will endeavour to show later.

Now, when a person has produced a desirable commodity, from a business point of view, the next thing is to put it on the market and advertise it well, so as to make it known. Man was by no means a pioneer in this kind of enterprise. Plants had been advertising very largely ages before man came on the earth, and competition was very keen amongst them when he made his advent. Those plants which advertised best, or which put out the most attractive posters, so to speak, naturally did the largest business. Or, I will put it in another way: the flowers of those plants which happened to develop coloured petals about their floral parts (*i.e.*, the ovary and stamens) caught the eyes of passing insects first. These petals were to the insects the equivalent of the sign-board of the inn to the thirsty traveller; the insect read from them—"Stop here for prime sweet nectar." Coloured petals, then, were advertisements pure and simple; the plant provided nectar for insects, and in return asked of the insect that, in seeking the nectar, it should rub against its stamens, and so (unknowingly) carry its pollen to the stigmas of sister blooms. Of course, at the same time it was bringing pollen to this flower from some brother flower for its own stigma. The petals, be it noted, were comparatively easy to produce by sacrificing a few outer stamens; these stalked bodies readily flatten out and become petals, as you may witness for yourself in any doubled flower that your garden produces. The gardener, too, is well aware of this, and by cultivation readily produces double roses and other flowers, for you will remember that the wild rose has only five petals but numerous stamens, while the cultivated garden rose has numerous petals and few or no stamens.

The bright petals of the flowers of the buttercup, rose, or bramble are then simply devices for attracting insects. The essential parts required for reproduction are stamens

and ovary. But I have previously stated that the little florets of the wild chamomile are more evolved and of a higher type of flower than the familiar flowers already mentioned, and now I will tell you why.

As time went on the coloured petals succeeded so well in attracting insects that many plants found particular types of insects greatly appreciating their nectar and the colours that their petals happened to be assuming, so they gradually adapted themselves to these particular insect visitors. If you will notice the next stalk of foxglove flowers (Fig. 4) that you meet with it will make my point quite clear. These flowers, it will be seen, have joined their petals together to form a tube that fits the humble bee that visits them almost exactly. A foxglove, then, is a higher type of flower than our bramble, buttercup, or rose, because it has specialized by uniting its petals together to form a tube specially adapted to a particular form of insect, an adaptation which makes it practically certain of pollination when the bee enters, whereas in open flowers, as buttercups and wild rose, pollination is not so certain.

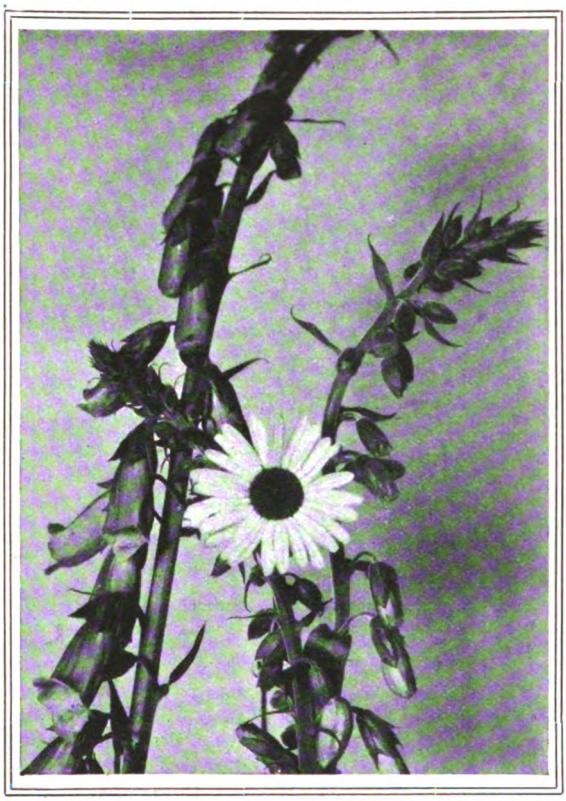


Fig. 4.—The foxglove and the ox-eye daisy literally represent "the long and the short of it" in floral arrangement. The former has a long stalk of tubular flowers with the youngest at the top, while the latter also has numerous smaller tubular flowers, but crowds them all together on a more or less flat surface, with the youngest in the centre.

Also notice that the flowers of the foxglove are arranged on a special central stalk (not mixed up with the leaves), and that they open from the bottom upwards, the youngest being at the top (Fig. 4). Of course, it is plain that the bee can only visit one flower on the stalk at a time; but now let us suppose that a plant with a stalk of flowers, something on the lines of the foxglove, should slowly shorten its stalk and evolve such an arrangement of its flowers that they became crowded all together on a more or less flat surface, so that the bee could tumble out of one, as it were, into the next immediately without seeking for it round and up or down the stem. This, of course, would result in a great saving of time in the day's work of the busy bee, and the bee would also be able to visit many more flowers. Then, if the same plant narrowed down its tubular flowers into smaller tubes so that the bee would only have to thrust in its proboscis or tongue to reach the nectar, instead of entering the flowers, a still further advantage would be gained in the same direction.

Doubtless, you will begin to understand that our chamomile daisy has done all these things. If you could take hold of the centre florets of a daisy blossom, at the point where the youngest flowers are found, and pull it upwards, spiral-fashion, until it became straightened out, just as you might the centre of a watch-spring, you would then have in miniature a stalk with numerous florets arranged about it, with the youngest at the top, very like the foxglove. Or, conversely, if you could press in from the top, spiral-fashion, the stalk of the foxglove so that the youngest flowers were left in the centre and the oldest outside, you would have produced a kind of large daisy. I do not mean, of course, that daisies have originated from foxgloves, but simply desire to show you how the shortening of a stalk of bell or tube shaped flowers could produce a daisy-like inflorescence.

Now, if we look to illustration Fig. 2 we see the rounded central mass arranged about

the wall of a hollow conical space, and this walled space is really the equivalent of the foxglove's elongated stalk. Also we notice in Fig. 3 that the highest tube, or floret, which comes from the top of the central mass is unopened, because it is one of the youngest flowers. The second one is seen to be opening its petals, and the third is opened and pouring from its mouth a mass of pollen, pushed from the united ring of stamens within by the stigma as it makes its way through. The stigma, however, does not open its receptive surface while working through lest it should be pollinated with its own pollen. In the lowest floret the stigma has appeared and opened its receptive surface.

If you watch a bee when it visits a daisy type of blossom you will notice that it starts on the lowest and widest-opened florets, and then works round, thrusting its proboscis in each tube as it goes in search of the nectar. Having just come from a neighbouring blossom, with its body and legs well dusted with pollen, the projecting and sticky stigmas, being outermost on these florets, are practically certain to receive some of this pollen. The bee eventually reaches the higher tiers of florets where the pollen has appeared, but from which the stigmas have yet to protrude, and after it has ransacked these for their nectar it is again well dusted with pollen. The younger and unopened florets it leaves for some other day, and so departs loaded with fertilizing pollen for the stigmas of the lowest florets of the next daisy bloom it visits; for the bee wisely keeps to one kind of nectar on each of its journeys.

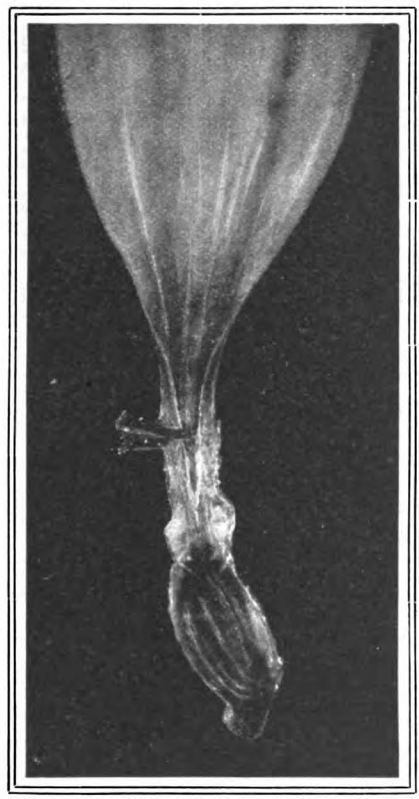


Fig. 5.—Part of one of the outer ray florets, showing how its tube has been abnormally developed on one side to produce the white petal-like part. The stigma is seen protruding from the tube, and at the base is the seed—magnified twenty diameters.

I think you will now understand the meaning of the central yellow mass of the chamomile daisy; and if you look closely at such daisy blooms you may see for yourself the successive stages of unopened, opening, and opened flowers. This, too, explains why daisies are so lasting as cut "flowers"—the blossom lasts while the numerous florets have time to open and develop.

There still remain, however, the white outer florets. What of these? Well, when the daisies adopted this method of dwarfing and crowding their flowers together, although they attained the desired end of rapid pollination by insect agency, yet they necessarily did away with large showy petals, which was a somewhat serious loss, for this convenient arrangement certainly needed advertising to the insects for whom it was designed. However, the problem was solved by specializing the outermost row of florets. That specialization consisted in suppressing their stamens entirely, leaving them with an ovary only, and then the energy which would have been required for building their stamens and pollen was directed into producing a one-sided development of their tubes; so that we get, apparently, all round the yellow central florets strap-shaped white petals; but in reality these outer florets are just like the inner ones, except that their tubes are abnormally developed on one side, that their stamens are absent, and that they are white, whereas the central florets are yellow (Fig. 5).

Thus the daisies have mimicked the appearance of a single flower, owing probably to the fact that insects had so thoroughly learned to distinguish that style of floral form that it had become indispensable. Insects, however, and especially bees, have now learnt to distinguish between single flowers and the composite class, and they patronize the latter more freely, for the simple reason that they find them so much more profitable; that is to say, they get a bigger feed of nectar in a shorter time with less trouble. At the same time this patronage results in further establishing the daisy tribe, and therefore to-day it is the most extensive family of flowering plants in the world.

Fig. 6.—A branch of wild chamomile photographed at midday, and——

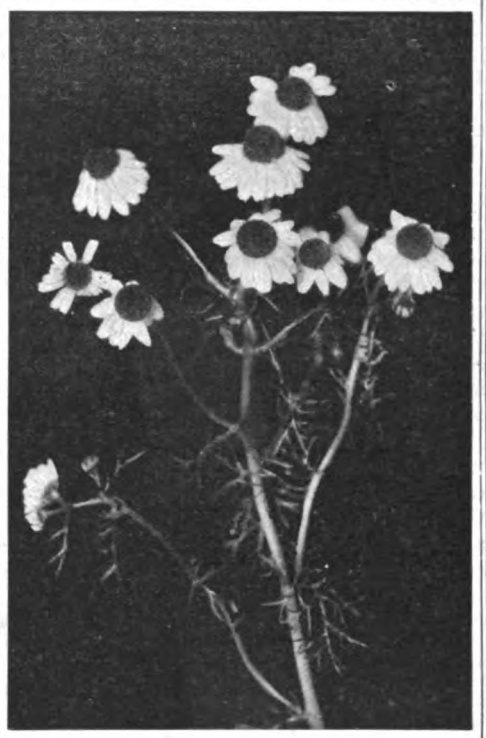


Fig. 7.——then again at 6 p.m. Note how the white, outer petal-like florets have turned down towards the stems to protect the central part of the blossom from dew and rain. The common field daisy acts in an exactly opposite manner, by closing up its white rays, to effect the same purpose.

If space permitted, I could point out to you many other interesting aspects of our plant, the wild chamomile, such as its method of dividing up its foliage into the finest segments, so that, no matter how crowded it may be amongst grasses and such-like leaves, it can edge its way in between and get some of the all-important sunlight. Such details all point to the keen struggle it has had to attain its present rank and power. I will conclude with a little feature that I noticed while studying the plant for the preparation of this article.

In illustration Fig. 6 part of a plant is shown photographed about midday. In Fig. 7 the same plant is shown again photographed about 6 p.m. Note how the white florets have now turned back (later at night or with the darkness from approaching storms they turn back still more) towards the stem. Now, if you remember, the field daisy, an almost identical kind of blossom, closes up its white florets at night to protect from cold and wet its central florets. Why does the chamomile act in an exactly opposite manner? My answer would be, to protect its florets from dew and wet. The central florets of the field daisy are arranged upon a much flatter surface than the chamomile, and its florets are more upright, so that rain and dew could accumulate in the tubes and wash out their pollen and nectar. Therefore, the daisy closes over them its outer ray florets. But the tubular florets of the chamomile, you will remember, do not stand upright when they open, but lie more or less horizontally, and, moreover, the central mass of tubular florets is more conical and larger than that of the field daisy. Consequently, the outer florets of the chamomile could not cover the central mass if they closed over as do those of the daisy, and then raindrops that fell in would be driven into the horizontal lower tubes. But by turning the ray florets downwards these conduct the water which might fall on the somewhat conical centre to the ground. Furthermore, from the fact of its tall growth, I conclude that the chamomile florets are more hardy than those of the field daisy, and therefore better able to stand cold. This, therefore, is, I think, the reason why these two very similar flowers act so differently when storms and night approach.

Riall in the Race Riots.

ANOTHER ADVENTURE OF THE "YAP" REPORTER.

By Edward Price Bell.

WHEN Riall got home, shortly after midnight, he found Helen, as was her wont, waiting for him.

"Well, Nell," said he, her face between his hands, his spirit rejoicing in her beautiful eyes, "of all the girls on this old earth you're the sweetest. How's the baby?"

"Splendid," said Helen.

Turning back the silken cot-cover, Riall gazed down at the fine, big head of his boy, cuddling deep in the pillow, rosy in sleep. Then he put on his smoking-jacket, slipped his feet into his warm house-shoes, and sat down with the firelight gilding his sharp features.

"What's the news to-night?" inquired Helen.

"Oh, nothing but election; brass bands, cheap orators, and howling mobs all over the place."

"And how is the election going?"

"Heaven only knows. Everybody claims everything. The Republicans are going to 'win in a walk'; the Democrats have 'won already.' Even the Prohibition candidate, I believe, proclaims himself a sure victor. Now, what the deuce's that?"

The bell was ringing.

"Who's there?" shouted Riall, down the speaking-tube to the front entrance.

"A messenger from the managing editor," came back the answer.

"RIALL GAZED DOWN AT THE FINE, BIG HEAD OF HIS BOY."

"Please come up," requested Riall.

"The managing editor wishes me to tell you, sir," said the messenger, standing uncovered in the doorway, "that serious election troubles are expected between the whites and the blacks at Welbyton, North Carolina, and that you are to start East on the five o'clock limited this morning. I have brought you a ticket. You are to call at the Riggs, Washington, for expense-money, which will be sent on by wire."

At 4.30 o'clock Riall was bumping to the station over the cobblestones in a five-dollar cab. The hue of his face was not unlike that of the breaking day. The alarm clock he had set, but, again and again raising his head, had watched the hands moving slowly round in the faint glow of the nightlight. Besides, he had been unable to resist the impulse to talk with Helen. It was his second big assignment — his first was in the Chippewa War — and his mind was occupied with all the anxious thoughts that went before, and with his maiden effort in the domain of great reporting.

"Don't worry; you'll come out all right."

This Helen had said a hundred times.

"To be sure," Riall had answered; "I'll give them the best I've got. But it's the same old clannish crowd of seasoned men that I'll be up against."

Contrasted with his brother correspondents,

fellow-passengers in the Pullman, Riall was a unique and solitary figure. Somehow he did not acquiesce in their moods and ways. Seeing a good deal of most of them in the Chippewa War, some of them he had found admirable—especially Cavalier, the old war-horse; but he was hardly at home in the presence of their light and cynical talk, and he shrewdly surmised that his freshness from the farm and the country towns made him a shining mark for their shafts of ridicule. Moreover, his sentiments as regarded a few of them tightened his thin lips and tensed his frame with militant revolt.

An electric street-car, tearing two wheels off his carriage, threw him, bag, camera, and umbrella, into the middle of Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington. Thus it happened that, after getting his money at the Riggs and sending a telegram to Helen, Riall lost the midday express to the South.

"It means," he thought, as the hotel surgeon stitched a deep cut above his left eye, "that I shall be mighty lucky to get off a story at all to-night, not to mention a decent one."

When, six hours later, the next train left for Welbyton, Riall lay back in the chair-car, bruised and sore, looking up at his belongings in the brass rack above, and grimly smiling over his undignified adventure in the capital.

Well up in the heavens stood the sun when the train, delayed by wash-outs, steamed into Welbyton, ten hours late. The bridge over Carter Creek, fearfully swollen, a mile out of the town, barely bore up the creeping engine and cars, already many hours behind time, and a moment afterwards was carried off by the flood, severing railway communication with the North.

At the telegraph office Riall met Cushing, the *Daily Planet* man—thick-set, curly-haired, dark-skinned, shifty-eyed.

"Have you seen the local daily, just out?" asked Cushing.

"I have not," replied Riall, somewhat puzzled.

"Things seem a bit warm farther south," added the *Daily Planet* man, handing Riall a copy of the Welbyton *Argus*. "I guess all of us will be off shortly. Good day."

"Good day, and thank you very much," said Riall, strongly inclined to think better of Cushing.

On the first page of the *Argus* Riall's eyes met a bulletin from Cotton Centre, fifty miles from Welbyton, reporting a fierce encounter between white men and negroes. "All the people, white and black, are arming," ran the announcement, "and a pitched battle is a question of hours."

Welbyton was highly feverish; firearms were in all hands, but as yet there was no actual outbreak, and Riall told the coloured 'bus-driver at the hotel that he wanted to catch the first train to Cotton Centre.

"It ain't hahd to kotch, boss," said the negro, with a gleam of his white teeth.

If at all cryptic at first, this observation radiated light later. Flat-cars, box cars, and aged passenger coaches in sorry medley, with a diminutive engine in the last stages of asthma, composed the train that "wasn't hahd to kotch." It set Riall down in Cotton Centre, after the weariest fifty miles of his life, in the midst of a black and tomb-like silence. At the National House, writing his name in the register, he underwent a genial survey by the proprietor, lanky, frock-coated, and silver-grey goateed.

"Any further rioting here to-day?" asked Riall, returning the quill pen to the host.

"Rioting, suh?"

"Yes. Any more people killed?"

"People killed, suh?"

"Now, my friend," exclaimed Riall, nettled by what looked like a foolish attempt to conceal notorious events, "I'm a newspaper man. I've travelled a long way to get the facts about these race riots. You can greatly facilitate——"

The Southern gentleman had lifted his right hand.

"It strikes me, suh," he broke in, with emphasis; "if you'll pahdon me, suh——"

"Yes?"

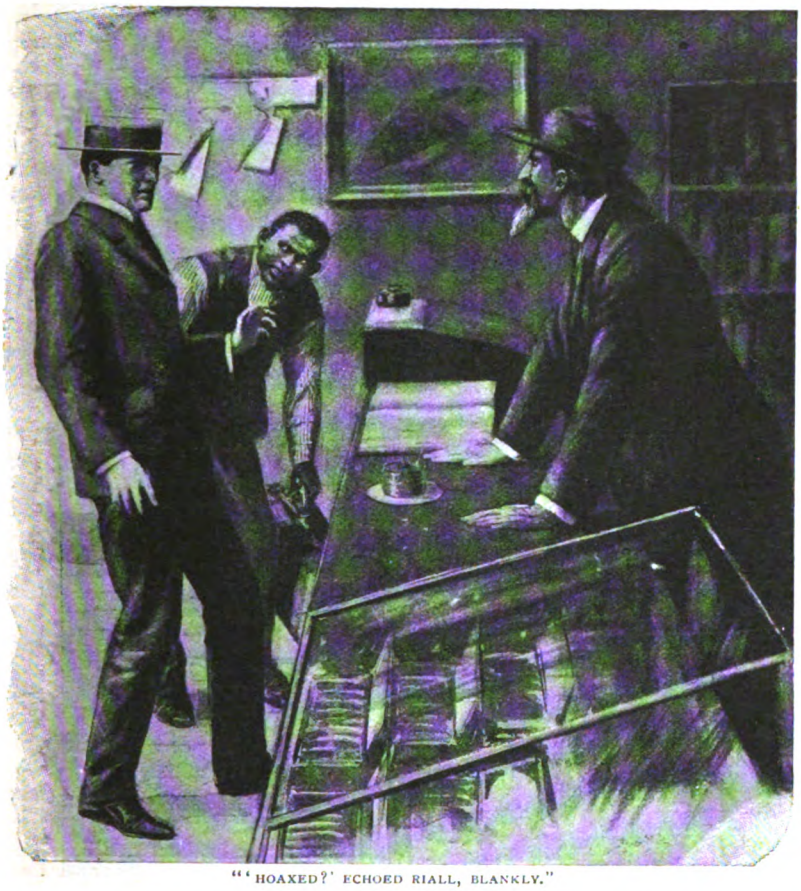
"That you have been—uh—*hoaxed*, suh."

"Hoaxed?" echoed Riall, blankly, his senses hard smitten.

Clear, now, was Cushing's friendly intercession.

"I've been 'tricked,' that's all," said Riall, mechanically. "I see now why Cushing wasn't on the train, nor any of the rest. That was a 'dummy' impression of the *Argus*, got out by the *Daily Planet* man and some accomplice in the office. It's all Cushing's handiwork; the others wouldn't 've done it, especially Cavalier."

Shame and misery Riall drank to the dregs, waiting in the pale light of the lamps, at the railway crossing a mile out of Cotton Centre, for the north-bound night express, which did not stop in the town. At sunrise, slowly crossing the mile-long bridge over Cape Spray River into Welbyton, the unhappy news-hunter beheld, on the broken shore, a



"'HOAXED?' ECHOED RIALL, BLANKLY."

picturesque city—the straggling huts of the negro quarter in the lowlands to the west, the more imposing structures of the white population on the higher ground to the east. Below, in the golden sunlight, the river moved swiftly seawards, a plain of fire. Beyond, much closer than Riall had realized, heaved and flashed the parti-coloured Atlantic. Athwart the Spray bulked the great form of a liner, ploughing its steady course from New Orleans to New York, its lifeboats glistening in the sun, its funnels hanging a murky drapery against the azure sky.

Strenuous indeed were Riall's labours on that day. Happily there still had been no general violence; Welbyton still offered only a "situation" story. All the important people of the town, white and black, politicians, lawyers, doctors, ministers, business men, Riall interviewed, and at his typewriter in his room after dinner he sat down to write what he believed would be the most impartial and searching account yet composed of the race strife of Welbyton.

Toiling over the first sentence, striving after his kind firmly to strike the keynote of the matter in his opening words, suddenly there broke in upon him a deafening uproar from the street. One moment Riall listened, his hands limp at his sides. There was the bang of shot-guns, the crack of rifles, the demoniac yelling of men. Pale and hatless, his door open, his notes scattered, Riall dashed down the stairway into the lobby.

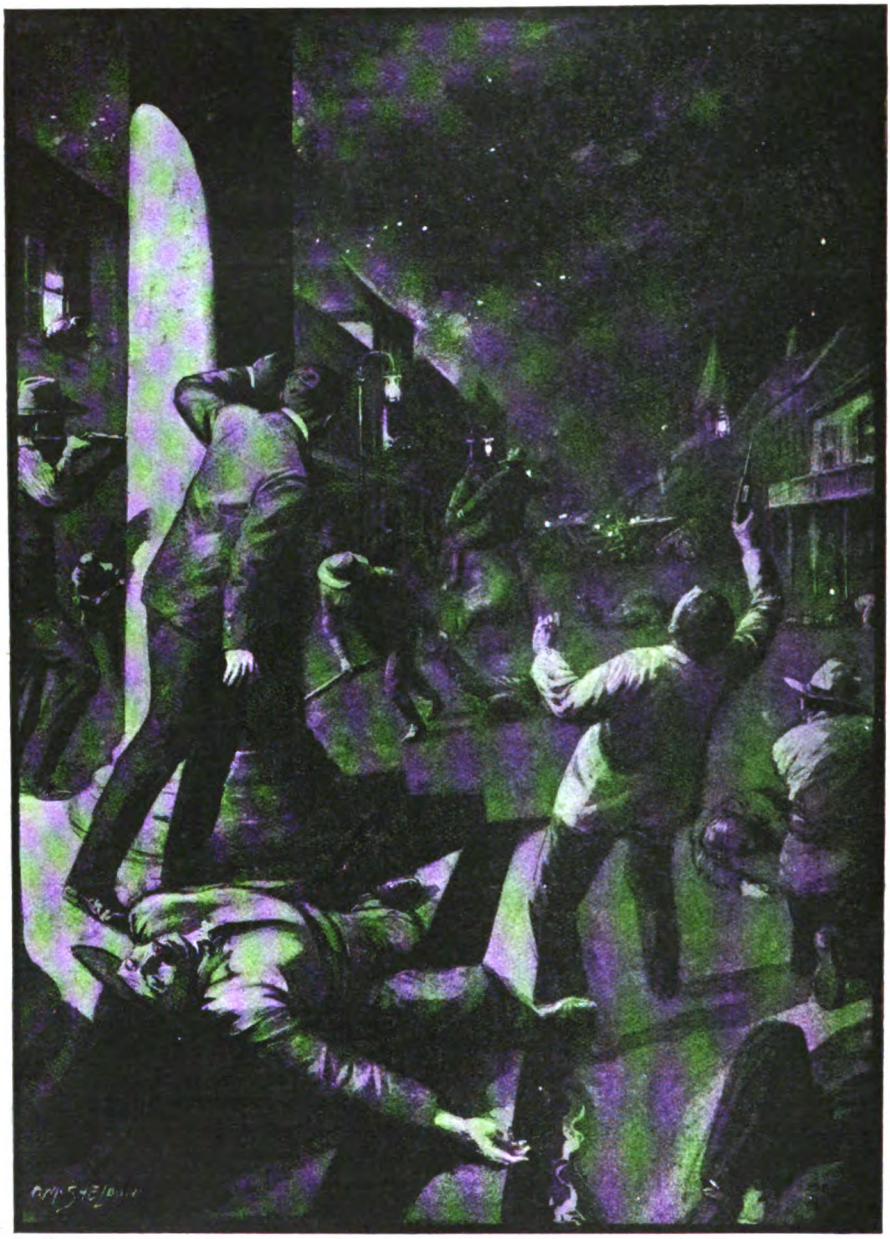
"What's broken loose?" he cried.

"The Red-Shuhts, suh," answered a Southerner, coolly.

What the Red-Shirts were Riall's inquiries that day had informed him; their other name was negro-killers—white hillmen, in cowboy hats and red-flannel shirts, armed with every variety of weapon, and sweeping down from the heights on horseback—a demon cavalry.

Gaining the street as the tail end of the cavalcade rushed past, Riall imagined he saw again the Red Warriors riding, wildly, desperately, in disordered mass, dexterous with firearm, merciless with rowel. Westwards sped the chaotic column. Behind, caught in its suction, people poured into the street and pressed forwards. Riall ran with the crowd, all about him bristling shot-guns, rifles, and pistols. No one on foot was yelling; stern and pale, each runner threw the last ounce of his strength into his running.

In his soul Riall felt a profound and sombre anxiety. The Welbyton of Caucasian blood—inquiry showed it but too plainly—was violently intolerant of the negro; rightly or wrongly, it deemed him, politically, socially, economically, a curse and a peril.



"SCREENING HIMSELF BEHIND A STONE COLUMN, HE SAW IN THE WHITE RAYS OF ARC-LAMPS A LONG SERIES OF STREET BARRICADES."

To-morrow was National Election day. The negroes, greatly outnumbering the white men, the contrary of meek, were a long way from any disposition to forego the full fruits of their numerical predominance. And, therefore, running at top speed with the pale-faced multitude, Riall felt in his soul the imminence of crucial and tragic things.

"Hey!" he cried, as he turned a corner, seizing a fleet-footed Southerner by the shoulder and pointing to a deep orange spot on the clouds, "What does that mean?"

"It means, suh," panted the runner, "that the negro quahtah's on fiah!"

The negro quarter on fire!

At the boundary between this and the white quarter Riall encountered a deadly fusillade. Screening himself behind a stone column, he saw in the white rays of arc-lamps a long series of street barricades, built

of boards and beams, carts, bedsteads, bed-quilts, bed-ticks made of corn-husks, cook-stoves—whatever the negroes could hastily throw up against the enemy. From end to end these barricades spat smoke and fire. Before them was a clear space of forty yards. Then came a tangled mass of fighting horsemen and footmen, driven back in confusion by the hotness of the negro fire, sheltering in by-streets, doorways, stairways, lying flat on the pavement, climbing to upper storeys to over-shoot the black men's defences.

Of bursts of heroism from the white men's side there were many—attempt after attempt to cross the bullet-swept zone. But, invariably, the aggressors, decimated, fell back in disorder, dragging their wounded. At first the rapid cracking of pistols and rifles and the roar of shotguns were all Riall heard. Then, painfully, his ears began to tell of human agony, of poignant suffering and grief. Thick about him were fallen bodies, some writhing, some still. The bare plain before the barricades was spattered and clotted. Darkening the asphalt trickled tiny streams, one so considerable that Riall said to himself, "It is water." He stooped and touched it. He lifted his fingers to the light. And it, too, he found a part of the white man's libation to the supremacy of his race.

From the spell of the scene at his feet, suddenly Riall was awakened by a portentous phenomenon beyond and above—a great rolling mass of spark-showered smoke. Coming from the west, driving rapidly towards the high ground to the east, Riall saw this phenomenon magnetize a sea of dismayed faces. The Red-Shirts, circling round the barricades, had ignited some outlying huts at the extreme west. From these tinder-shanties, flying before a brisk wind, the sparks had reached the main part of the negro quarter, and now the white citizens of Welbyton, no longer firing, stock still in their tracks, awaited stupefied the onrush of the monster the Red-Shirts had created.

"Take to the hills! Take to the hills!"

Above all the din rose this cry, from the negro quarter and from the white quarter Over the race war the shadow of a common fatality had spoken a truce. Negroes and whites intermingled, Riall saw, streaming up the winding streets to the open country, carrying their little ones, dragging with them any who lagged or fainted. At a swift run, then, he started for the telegraph office. In the streets the smoke thickened; at times he lost his way; frequently he could not run—only grope and stumble. Coming out on the main square opposite him to the north, his goal, he ran upon Cavalier.

"We're in a tight box, old man," cried the veteran. "The fire, going at a great pace, is eating round the base of the hills towards the river. The bridge over the Spray is burning. We're lucky if we find a loophole. Come!"

"But the telegraph office?" interrogated Riall.

"Telegraph office be hanged! It's inside the ring of fire!"

"Cavalier," rejoined Riall, darting a keen glance into the eyes of the old war-horse, "for two nights on end I've been horribly beaten. To-night it's this telegraph office or none—no bridges, no trains, not another wire short of fifty miles. You go. I've got to have a try."

Before the older man could muster a protest Riall's slim figure had vanished in the smoke.

"Crazy!" muttered Cavalier, bolting at full speed.

In the door of the telegraph office, reached at a few swift strides, Riall collided with a young man, fleeing headlong, laden with personal effects. The two faced each other.

"Are you a telegrapher?" asked Riall.

"Yes; but for Heaven's sake get out of the way!"

"I want to send a hundred words to my paper," urged Riall, blocking the passage.

"You're mad! The office is on fire and ready to collapse!"

"I'll give you five hundred dollars to send fifty words."

"Get out of the way!" yelled the telegrapher.

"Try it! I'll give you a thousand dollars to try it!" cried Riall, whipping out a thick roll of bills.

Dropping his parcels, the young man wheeled back into the office, Riall on his heels. There, half an hour previously, fifty keys and sounders had been clattering; now, but for the crackling of the flames, there was silence; but for the blinding, choking smoke, vacancy. The fire was in the walls, in the ceiling, hungrily advancing over the board floor, eagerly licking about the legs and arms of the chairs, leaping for the single telegraph key still outside the maw of flame.

"What wire is that key on?" asked Riall.

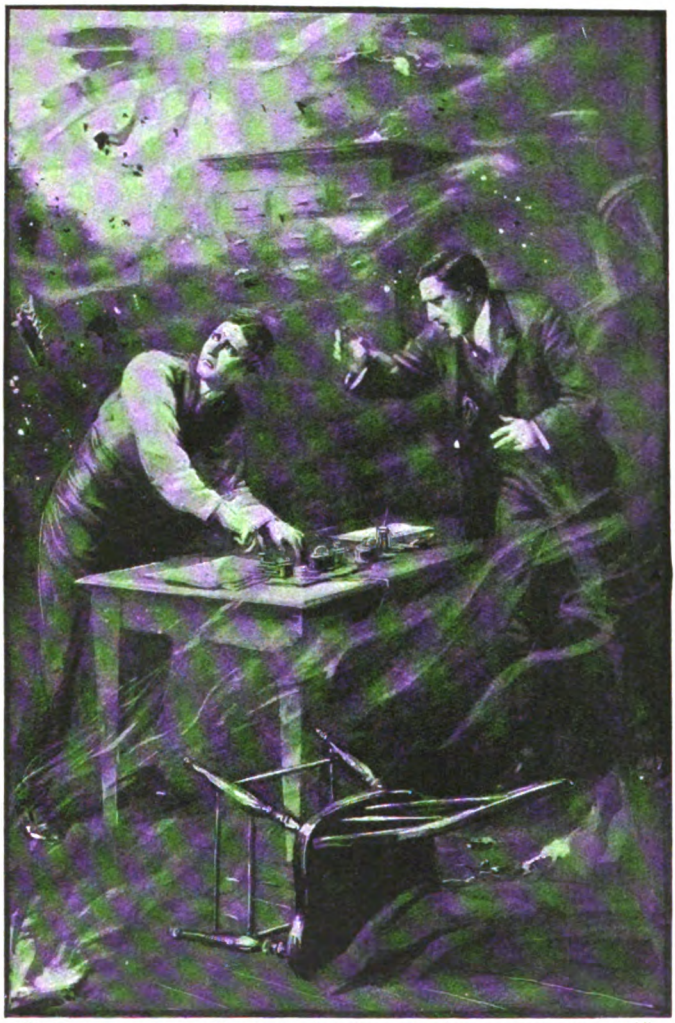
"The Washington wire."

"Then," shouted the correspondent, exultingly, "you can flash through my stuff. Seize the key! I'll dictate!"

"But look!" cried the telegrapher, falling back, aghast.

A seething mesh of fire, the ceiling was breaking up, and large pieces of blazing *débris* began to crash to the floor.

"But there's time enough," yelled Riall, hoarse with emotion. "Grab the key! Call Washington! Win for us, boy, win! and the *Morning Star* will make you rich!"



"WIN FOR US, BOY, WIN! AND THE 'MORNING STAR' WILL MAKE YOU RICH!"

Bounding forward and seizing the key, the telegrapher flashed over the wire a frantic call for Washington—just one, then sprang back with a cry of pain.

"The key's red-hot!" he exclaimed. "The thing's impossible! Another minute, and this building will be upon our heads!"

"Put on this glove!" pleaded Riall. "Try with it! Just once more!"

With overpowering suddenness, in the twinkling of an eye, Riall and the telegrapher were hurled violently backwards into the street, white with ashes, hands and faces blistered, heads throbbing with strange noises. The telegraph office was gone. In its place was a glowing heap, high columned with smoke and flame.

Faced by a wall of fire on the west and north the two men, shoulder to shoulder, forged to the south-eastward, dodging abandoned fire-engines, trampling on spurting lines of broken hose, their objective an outlet between the circling flames and the river. The problem, so far as they could see, was theirs alone; they met no one, heard no one, fought their fight pluckily, silently, in solitary comradeship. Seeming to *know*, to feel itself challenged, the fire was everywhere, appearing to hurry and strain with the lust of victory. Whithersoever they ran, from basement, wall, or roof abruptly bursting, it blocked every street, and shot a blazing barricade across every exit.

"We've got to give it up," admitted the telegrapher, foiled for the hundredth time in his effort to lead Riall through some passage or byway to the hills. "Our only hope is towards the water-front."

Straight for the river then they headed. As they ran the smoke thinned a trifle, and the sharp crackle of the flames merged into a deep diapason. Still, glancing back, they could see the fire rapidly advancing, sometimes seeming to leap over, envelop, annihilate a great building at a single spasmic impulse. The upper air was a mass of ashy haze—a dull firmament, lit here and there by spark-nebulæ. Peltingly about the ears of the runners beat a fiery downpour. Continually they struck the clinging embers from each other's clothing and ran in the gutter-flow to cool their hot and warped boot-soles.

Pausing for breath under an iron-girdered viaduct, they observed the sparks, caught by

an erratic air-current, swerve from their easterly course and sweep over the buildings towards the river. If once the fire were in the big wooden warehouses and grain elevators on the quay there would be no escape. Springing forward, each was suddenly hit by a momentary numbness. The ground shuddered and swayed; all the air was vibrant. Staggering violently, deathly pale, both men beheld—high over their heads, far above the building-tops, shooting swiftly up into the hazy void—a marvellous spectacle of prismatic splendour. As a projectile it rose and then, rocket-like, burst into a tremendous shower of red lights, blue lights, green, yellow, and white lights—all the tints and tones in the gamut of colour.

"The chemical works gone sky-high!" gasped the telegrapher. "Not a second to lose!"

Finally, effectually entrapped, they found themselves on shelving flagstones, between two blank walls, looking out over the wide surface of the firelit Spray.

"Can you swim, my friend?" asked Riall.

"Yes, thank you," replied the telegrapher. "can you?"

On Riall's blistered face there was the ghost of a smile. His hardy boyhood; the old Racoon River, rushing, in summertime in tumultuous freshet across the lowlands of the farm; these came back to him. In those not over-distant days, he reflected, the countryside, from upland to upland, knew no more enthusiastic, no stouter, swimmer than he.

"It's a long pull, brother," he said, endeavouring to search out the distant shore

"So it is; but I hope we'll be equal to it To me these waters are familiar; maybe you had better stay behind a bit, and follow my lead."

"Look!" said Riall, pointing far out and upstream; "is that wreckage?"

Intently the other studied the object.

"I'll tell you what it is," he exclaimed, turning on Riall a brightened face; "it's a boat, burnt loose from its moorings above the bend. See! the stump of the painter is still ablaze!"

Simultaneously two forms struck the tide.

"Better not fight too hard with this stiff current," shouted the telegrapher, going at an easy side-stroke a few paces before; "keep your strength for a long swim. We'll catch the boat finally, even if we drift beyond the lighthouse."

And so they swam, on and on, above them the lurid effulgence of the devastated town; about them, eddying, rippling, gurgling, the mighty river, racing out into the ample bosom of the illimitable sea.

Kibbe asleep—folded-armed, his big head on his typewriter, at his elbow a silent telegraph sounder, his black hair gold-tinged by the rising sun. Listless, hard by, a lone telegraph copy-reader, munching his sandwich and sipping his coffee. In the composing-room, two pale-faced printers, lounging by their machines, reading the papers; two grimy-handed make-up men, shifting type; a roguish-visaged galley-boy, washing galleys. In the basement, a group of stereotypers and press hands, yawning and idling. All the apparatus and machinery of the vast establishment still. The "dog-watch" at the *Morning Star*, most pertinacious that morning of all the "dog-watches" in the newspaper offices of the northern city.

Kibbe started out of his sleep as if at the crack of a pistol.

Shrilly, wildly, the sounder by his side was calling: "M—S, M—S, M—S, M—S."

"I—I, M—S," answered Kibbe, struggling to dash his stupor.

A momentary pause.

Ardently, then, the instrument sprang to its function, and Kibbe, great code expert, profoundly attentive, loosed upon the keyboard the magic of his fingers. Sheet after sheet, springing up by quick impulses, leapt to the copy-desk, thence to the linotypes. Almost in a flash, out of universal silence was born sound, out of inertia motion. Minds, eyes, hands, wheels coursed in constructive unison towards the "extra" that shortly should appal the streets with the *Morning Star's* powerful and exclusive story of the fire and war of Welbyton.

Again, at last, the sounder was dumb.

"Funny," said the copy-reader to Kibbe; "obviously, it's our man's yarn; but how is it that it comes from New York, and what's happened to the signature?"

Kibbe made no reply. Looking hard was he at his life-long companion in brass—the instrument whose harsh tongue, speaking gibberish to others, spoke so eloquently and intimately to him.

"M—S, M—S, M—S," sharply it cried.

"I—I, M—S," answered Kibbe.

"North Carolina story," chattered the metallic sphinx, "should be dated ss. *Coast Queen*, four hundred miles S.S.W. Sandy Hook. Stuff comes by wireless from some chap picked up at sea off Welbyton. Signature uncertain; looks like 'Riall.'"

THE UNIVERSAL THEME.

BEING THE WEIRD EXPERIENCES OF A DOCTOR OF MUSIC.

By Henry Saint-George.

I HAVE had a most wonderful experience. No, it was not a dream, as I can conclusively prove to your satisfaction. I had been out music-teaching all day—a very cold day, with a bitter wind blowing—had returned, and, having partaken of my evening meal, was sitting cosily by the fireside, cigar in hand, full decanter at elbow, waiting patiently till the boy from the newspaper-shop should bring me my copy of The Strand Magazine.

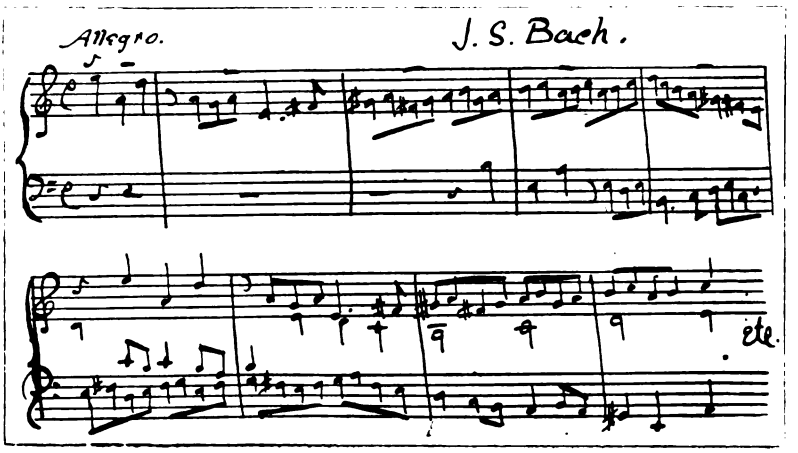
You see, I remember all these details perfectly, so could not possibly have been in a dreamy state. Also my Mus.Doc. degree should be taken as evidence that I am not an imaginative individual. The characteristic of the strange episode I am about to lay before you is the exceptional clearness with which I perceived even the most insignificant details. I was able to carry every incident fully and definitely in my mind, even to writing down the wonderful compositions it was my glorious privilege to hear.

Having thus decisively set at rest any doubts as to the actuality of the weird yet enthralling experience, I will now proceed to give you a brief account of what happened on that never-to-be-forgotten evening.

As I said, I was waiting for The Strand Magazine, and the name of that delightful journal kept running in my head in a most musical cadence. It then suddenly occurred to me that nearly half the letters were the names of musical notes, thus :—

E A D A G A E.

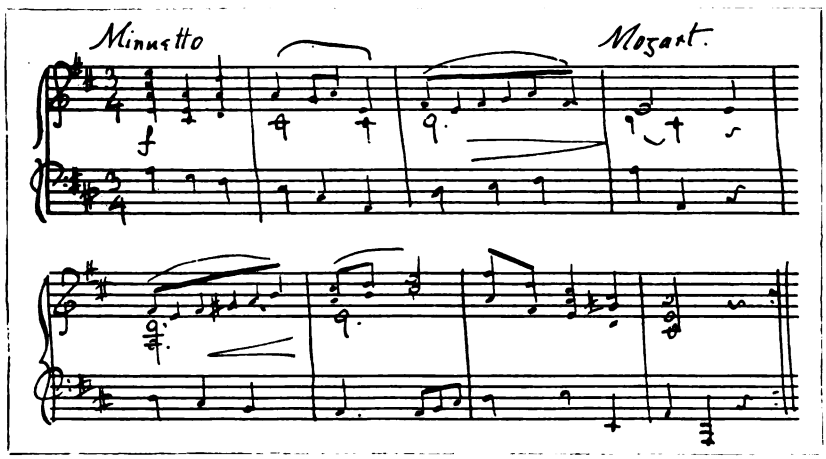
So far there was nothing abnormal. Writing these notes down on a piece of MS. music-paper I advanced to the piano, wondering in my mind what the great masters would have made of this curiously-discovered theme. At this moment—you perceive how exactly I was able to note things—the normal changed to the super-



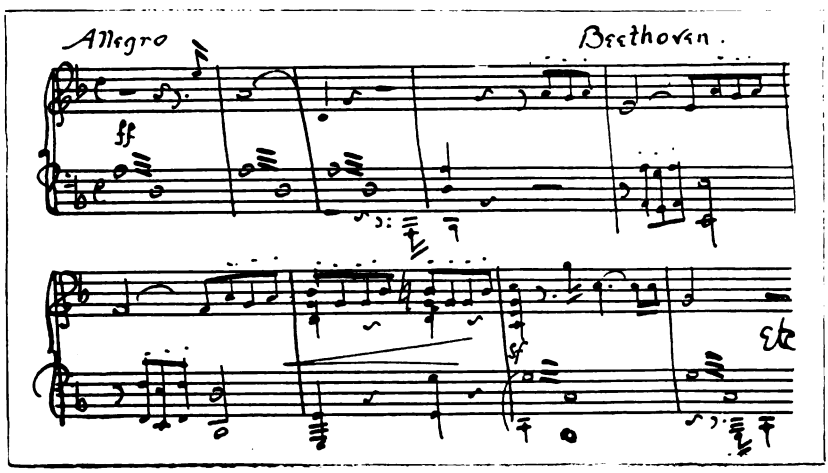
normal. Mind you, there was no change in myself, only in my surroundings. Thus, as I approached my cottage piano, that elegant and useful instrument assumed gigantic proportions; the keyboard became a flight of ivory and ebony steps leading upwards to what had been the panels of the piano, but were now doors of curiously-carven wood, flanked by the candelabra, which had become glorified into massive golden braziers.

With no feelings beyond one of mild curiosity I ascended the stairs and passed through the doors into another world, where I found assembled all the greatest tone-artists of the world in a mighty concourse. I stood a moment, my slip of paper fluttering in my hand, when there advanced to me, with a genial, questioning glance, none other than the great John Sebastian Bach! His eagle eye fell on my slip of paper, which he seized and eagerly scanned. Then, turning to the others, he cried, "Here it is, my brothers; here is the Universal Tema we have been so long praying for." They crowded round him with many expressions of incredulous wonder while, with uncanny rapidity, Bach dashed off the fugue, of which space only permits me to quote the few bars shown at the bottom of the previous page.

Although warmly applauding, Mozart, who took my slip out of Bach's hand, said that he preferred something less severely scholastic, and produced the graceful and characteristic minuetto, of which, again, I can only quote the opening:—

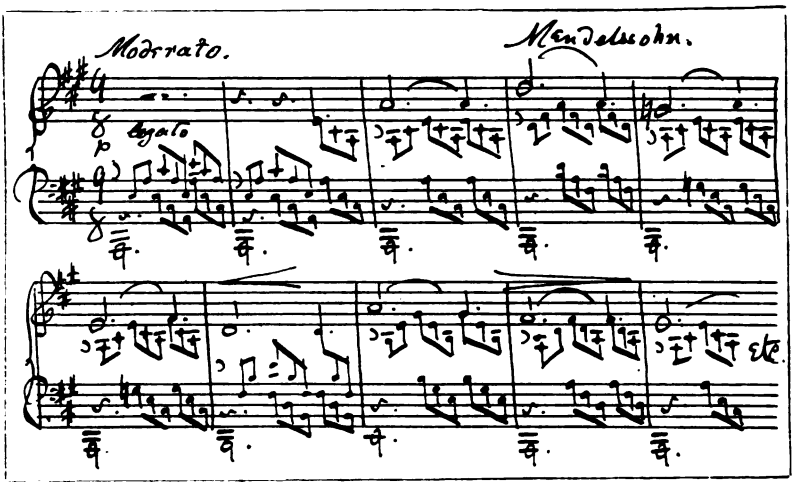


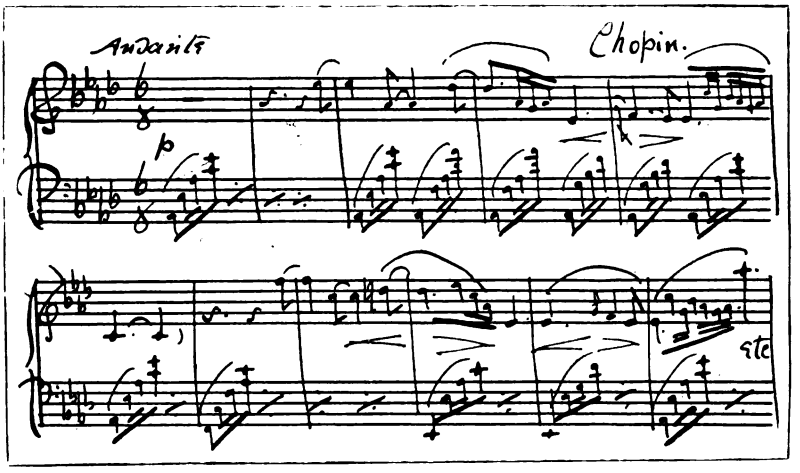
I then became aware that Beethoven had been striding restlessly round the knot of musicians gathered about my little slip of paper. Suddenly he darted into the midst, and, snatching up the paper, gave it one glance, and dashed off a stormy movement, commencing thus:—



"There," said Beethoven, "that is what it *means*. Fugues and minuettos amuse; this *teaches*."

"Well said, master," exclaimed Mendelssohn, "well said! At the same time, I must say that I derive more calm comfort from the new Tema our unknown friend has brought us.

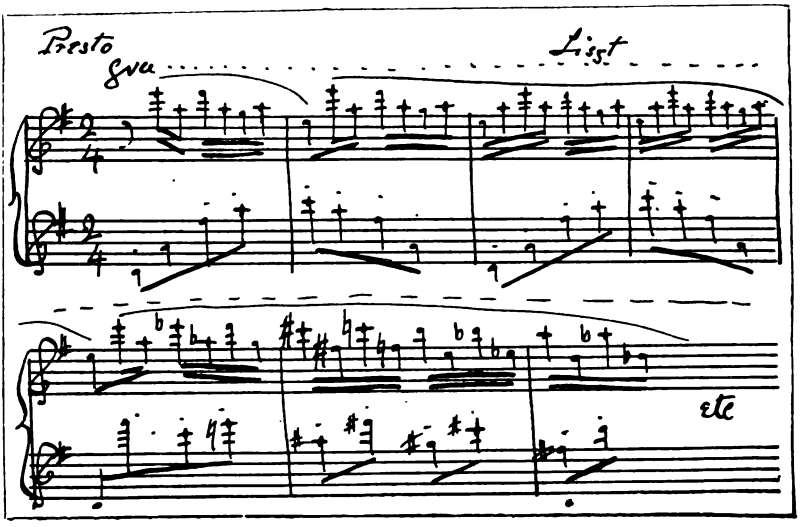




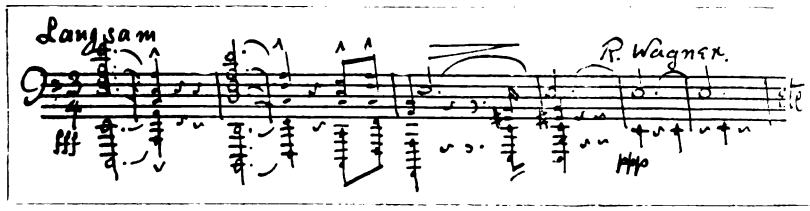
The white mane of Liszt was then tossed into view. "Well, my friends," said he, "your attempts have been very charming, but you overlook one thing, or, rather, ten things. Pianists have fingers; why not use them? This is how the little tune appears to me":—

Music should sing—not necessarily with words. What do you say to this?"

Chopin then intervened, and, holding the slip before his eyes a moment, cried, "What a delightful, melting theme! It wants only to be transposed on to the black notes to be made perfect. Listen!"

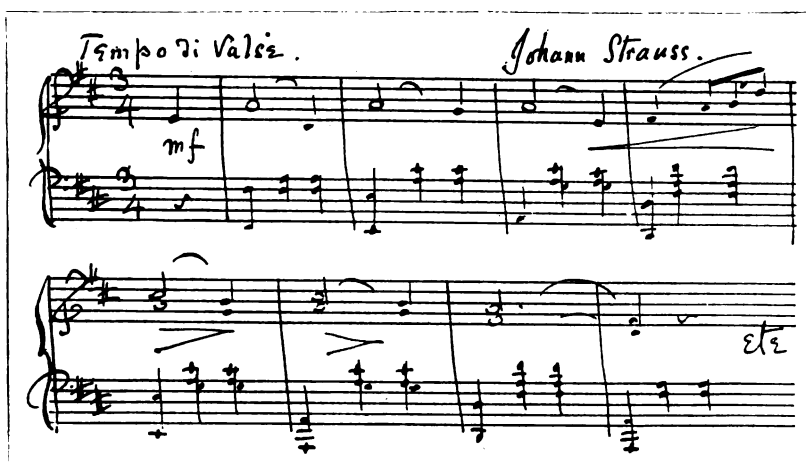


"Bravo," cried Wagner; "bravo, fingers; but, friends all, have you really not seen the true inner significance of these seven notes? This is how *I* hear them":—



"Do you not hear in them the relentless stride of the Fates? Those wild and withering women, wandering o'er the weary wastes of world-woe?"

At that moment Johann Strauss appeared on the scene. He addressed himself to the last two masters. "Why harp on Fates and death?" he asked. "Give me life, movement, passion! This is the only really satisfying treatment of the Universal Tema," whereupon he dashed into this exhilarating waltz:—



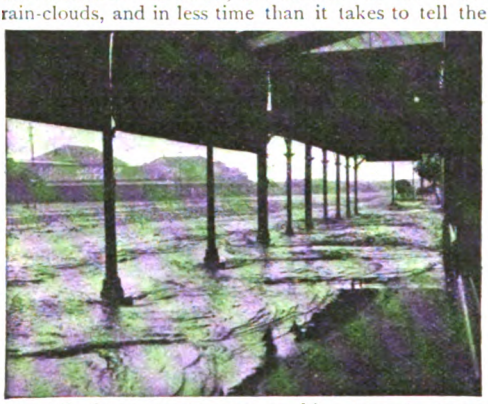
I noticed a horrified expression spreading over the features of all present. Murmurs of "Tanz-musik!" "Schändlich!" "Disgraceful!" etc., were to be heard from all sides. The tension grew more and more intense until, with a sudden crash, I found myself hurtling down, down, over the ivory and ebony stairs, down into my own room, where I fell panting, but unhurt, by rare good fortune into my easy-chair.

I had hardly regained my breath when my maid-servant entered the room with the copy of THE STRAND MAGAZINE in her hand. She looked confusedly from me to the *now empty* decanter, from the decanter to me, and I instantly realized how she had been employing and enjoying herself during my absence. You see how alert I was to notice things. Slyly hoping to divert my attention, she said: "That paper-boy do knock terrible loud, don't he, sir? I'm afraid it's woked you hup!" Woke me up, indeed! A bit too wide-awake for *her!* However, my feelings were far too extra-mundane for me to enter into a sordid squabble with an ignorant and debauched menial, and I was most anxious to write out all those priceless gems I had been permitted to listen to before they faded from my memory, so I said nothing at the time.

From Other Magazines.

A SOUTH AFRICAN THUNDERSTORM.

WHEN they get out-of-the-ordinary weather in South Africa—which is not very often— it is usually something very out of the ordinary ; moreover, it comes in "chunks," as an American would say, big enough to be remembered. Look, for instance, at the accompanying photograph. Buluwayo, the capital of Rhodesia, was enjoying its ordinary weather one day, when along came a thunderstorm. It burst ; the bottom fell out of the rain-clouds, and in less time than it takes to tell the



erstwhile dusty streets were seething torrents, everybody had been driven to shelter, and fierce eddies were swirling over the verandas of the hotels. Then, hey, presto ! the downpour ceased, the sun came out, and only the floods remained.—"THE WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE."

WORKING UP AN APPETITE.

I REMEMBER passing through the long corridor of the House of Lords one evening, and, as I reached the turn of the Spenser Room, seeing Earl Granville running along the Peers' section of the corridor. "Oh," exclaimed the constable on duty, "his ludship's dining in the House, and he's working up an appetite. He does so, too, when he's about to make a speech. He'll run up and down four times before he feels he can go for them or eat to his satisfaction."—"THE GRAND MAGAZINE."

HOLBEIN ON SWIMMING.

HAVING been an athlete for the past thirty years, during which time I have been a devotee of most branches of athletics — running, walking, cycling, and more especially swimming—after thinking the matter over carefully, I have come to the conclusion that swimming should take the highest place among athletic sports. In the first place, it admittedly exercises more muscles at one time than any other sport ; further, it is cleanly, invigorating, not a violent exercise, and therefore not likely to overstrain the body ; and, above all, it can claim what no other branch of athletics can—that a knowledge of the art may often be the means of saving one's own life or that of a fellow-creature.—"THE LADIES' FIELD."

GRAND FLANEUR, RACEHORSE AND CABHORSE.

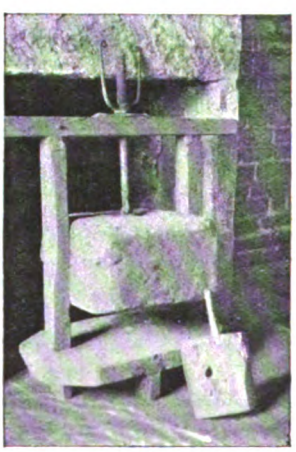
ONE day Grand Flaneur (who in former days had won two Portland Plates) decided that he had had enough of cab-pulling, and so he made up his mind to act. He worked up a very nasty fit of temper ; he fostered it until it was at bursting point, and then he fetched that cab a kick which made it look like an old packing-case, and not a particularly good one at that. He battered the hansom to smithereens, and managed incidentally to give the doctor a hint with his hoof which put him effectively on his own visiting list, and very nearly booked him for a post-mortem. On the whole it was as good a little surprise as he had ever engineered. He chose just the right moment. He had a fine eye for a dramatic situation, had the son of Saunterer.—"FRY'S MAGAZINE."

COOL !

THE coolness and presence of mind of General Bruce Hamilton are well illustrated by an incident which occurred during the South African War. The General was having a despatch read to him while they were in the firing line, and a bullet whizzed past, going right between two fingers of the A.D.C., who was reading as well as he could through the despatch. The A.D.C. stopped short, and looked at the hole made by the bullet in disgust. "Go on," drawled Hamilton ; "it can only have knocked out a word or two."—"TIT-BITS."

A RELIC OF BYGONE DAYS.

THE accompanying photograph, which appears in *Country Life*, portrays an ancient cheese-press which is now stored within the walls of that interesting old building, the "Hall i' th' Wood," which is now the property of the Corporation of Bolton, in Lancashire. It is particularly interesting to note, as showing the great antiquity of this relic of bygone days, that it was included in an inventory which was taken as far back as the year 1672.



CHAPTER X.

"IF," said Kathleen, sitting disconsolate in her marble, "if I am really a statue come alive, I wonder you're not afraid of me."

"I've got the ring," said Mabel, with decision. "Cheer up, dear. You'll soon be better. Try not to think about it."

She spoke as you speak to a child that has cut its finger, or fallen down on the garden path and risen up with grazed knees to which gravel sticks intimately.

"I know," Kathleen absently answered.

"And I've been thinking," said Mabel, brightly, "we might find out a lot about this magic place if the other statues aren't too proud to talk to you."

"They aren't," Kathleen assured her. "At least, Phœbus wasn't; he was awfully nice."

"Where is he?" Mabel asked.

"In the lake, he was," said Kathleen.

"Then let's go down there," said Mabel. "Oh, Cathy, it is jolly being your own proper thickness again." She jumped up, and the withered ferns and branches fell from her shoulders as forest leaves do when sudden storms tear them. But Kathleen did not move.

"I don't know," she said, twisting nervous marble fingers; "there's the dinosaurus!"

"You're not frightened of him?" said Mabel. "Why, he wouldn't hurt you. He's not real, you know."

"He felt real," said Kathleen, shuddering, and she told Mabel of that terrible experience of hers as inside passenger in the dinosaurus.

"Well, he's so big—he'd be as easy to dodge as a crocodile," Mabel consoled. "But I'm not afraid of him. I wonder why you are! You're not afraid of Phœbus?"

"You see," said Kathleen, slowly, "you've got the ring, and I'm just the same inside as if I wasn't a statue. What I mean to say," she went on, seeking for words, "I'm frightened of the dinosaurus—I always should be—if he was real and I was too. But if Phœbus was real I shouldn't be frightened of him, and so I'm not, now. See?"

The two sat on the grey moonlit grass with the quiet of the night all about them. The great park was still as a painted picture—only the plash of the fountains and the far-off whistle of the Western express broke the silence which, at the same time, they deepened.

"What cheer, little sister!" said a voice behind them—a golden voice. They turned quick, startled heads, as birds, surprised, might turn. There in the moonlight stood Phœbus, dripping still from the lake, and smiling at them, very gentle, very friendly.

"Oh; it's you!" said Kathleen.

"None other," said Phœbus, cheerfully. "Who is your friend, the earth-child?"

"This is Mabel," said Kathleen. Mabel got up and bowed, hesitated, and held out a hand.

"I am your slave, little lady," said Phœbus, enclosing it in marble fingers; "but I fail to understand how you can see us—and why you do not fear."

Mabel held up the hand that wore the ring.

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"Quite sufficient explanation," said Phœbus; "but, since you have that, why retain your mottled earthy appearance? Become a statue, and swim with us in the lake."

"I can't swim," said Mabel, evasively.

"Nor yet me," said Kathleen.

"*You* can," said Phœbus. "All statues that come to life are proficient in every athletic exercise. And you, child of the dark eyes and hair like night, wish yourself a statue and join our revels."

"I'd rather not, if you'll excuse me," said Mabel, cautiously. "You see—this ring—you wish for things, and you never know how long they're going to last. It would be jolly and all that to be a statue *now*, but in the morning I should wish I hadn't."

"Earth-folk often do, they say," mused Phœbus; "but, child, you seem ignorant of the powers of your ring. Wish exactly, and the ring will exactly perform. If you fix no limit of time, strange enchantments woven by the outcast god of numbers will creep in and spoil the spell. Say thus:—

"'I wish that till the dawn I may be a statue of living marble, even as my child friend, and that after that time I may be as before—Mabel of the dark eyes and night-coloured hair.'"

"Oh, yes, do, it would be so jolly," cried Kathleen; "do, Mabel. And you won't be afraid of the dinosaurus then."

"In the world of living marble fear is not," said Phœbus. "Are we not brothers, we and the dinosaurus, brethren alike wrought of stone and life?"

"And could I swim if I did?" Mabel asked.

"Swim, and float, and dive; and aid the ladies of Olympus to spread the nightly feast, eat of the food of the gods, drink of their cup, listen to the song that is undying, and catch the laughter of immortal lips."

"A feast?" said Kathleen. "Oh, Mabel, do! You would if you were as hungry as I am."

"But it won't be real food," urged Mabel.

"It will be real to you, as to us," said Phœbus. "There is no other realness, even in your many-coloured world."

Still Mabel hesitated. Then she looked at Kathleen's legs, and suddenly said:—

"Very well, I will; but first I'll take off my shoes and stockings. Marble boots look simply awful, especially the laces. And a marble stocking that's coming down—and mine *do!*"

She had pulled off shoes and stockings and pinafore.

"Mabel has the sense of beauty," said Phœbus, approvingly. "Speak the spell, child, and I will lead you to the ladies of Olympus."

Mabel, trembling a little, spoke it. And there were two little live statues in the moon-lit glade; tall Phœbus took a hand of each.

"Come—run!" he cried. And they ran.

"Oh, it's jolly," Mabel panted. "Look at my white feet in the grass. I thought it would feel stiff to be a statue; but it doesn't."

"There is no stiffness about the immortals," laughed the Sun God. "For to-night you are one of us."

And with that they ran down the slope to the lake.

"Jump!" he cried, and they jumped, and the water splashed up round three white, gleaming shapes.

"Oh, I *can* swim!" breathed Kathleen.

"So can I," said Mabel.

"Of course you can," said Phœbus. "Now three times round the lake, and then make for the island."

Side by side the three swam, Phœbus swimming gently to keep pace with the children. Their marble clothes did not seem to interfere at all with their swimming, as your clothes would if you suddenly jumped

"SIDE BY SIDE THE THREE SWAM."

into the basin of the Trafalgar Square fountains and tried to swim there. And they swam most beautifully, with that perfect ease and absence of effort or tiredness which you must have noticed about your own swimming —in dreams.

"This is the nicest thing the ring has brought us yet," said Mabel, through a languid but perfect side-stroke.

"I thought you'd enjoy it," said Phœbus, kindly; "now once more round, and then the island."

They landed on the island amid a fringe of rushes, yarrow, willow herb, loosestrife, and a few late, scented, powdery, creamy heads of meadow-sweet. The island was bigger than it looked from the bank, and it seemed covered with trees and shrubs. But when, Phœbus leading the way, they went into the shadow of these they perceived that beyond the trees lay a light—much nearer to them than the other side of the island could possibly be. And almost at once they were through the belt of trees, and could see where the light came from, and the trees they had just passed among made a dark circle round a big cleared space, standing up thick and dark, like a crowd round a football field, as Kathleen remarked.

First came a wide, smooth ring of lawn, then rounded marble steps going down to a pool where were no water-lilies, only gold and silver fish that darted here and there like flashes of quicksilver and dark flame. And the enclosed space of water and marble and grass was lighted with a clear white radiant light, stronger than the whitest moonlight, and in the still waters of the pool seven moons lay reflected.

On the farther side of the pool was a large group, so white that it seemed to make a great white hole in the trees. Some twenty or thirty figures there were in the group—all statues and all alive. Some were dipping their white feet among the gold and silver fish and sending ripples across the faces of the seven moons. Some were pelting each other with roses—roses so sweet that the girls could smell them even across the pool—others were holding hands and dancing in a ring, and two were sitting on the steps playing cat's-cradle—which is a very ancient game indeed—with a thread of white marble.

"Shall we join the ladies?" said Phœbus.

As the new-comers advanced a shout of greeting and gay laughter went up.

"Late again, Phœbus," someone called out. And another :—

"Did one of your horses cast a shoe?"

And yet another called out something about laurels.

"I bring two guests," said Phœbus, and instantly the statues crowded round, stroking the girls' hair, patting their cheeks, and calling them the prettiest love-names.

"Are the wreaths ready, Hebe?" the tallest and most splendid of the ladies called out. "Make two more!"

And almost directly Hebe came down the steps, her round arms hung thick with rose-wreaths. There was one for each marble head.

Everyone now looked seven times more beautiful than before, which, in the case of the gods and goddesses, is saying a good deal.

Hebe herself arranged the roses on the girls' heads, and the dearest lady in the world, with a voice like mother's at those moments when you love her most, took them by the hands and said :—

"Come, we must get the feast ready. Eros—Psyche—Hebe—Ganymede—all you young people can arrange the fruit."

"I don't see any fruit," said Kathleen, as four slender forms disengaged themselves from the white crowd and came towards them.

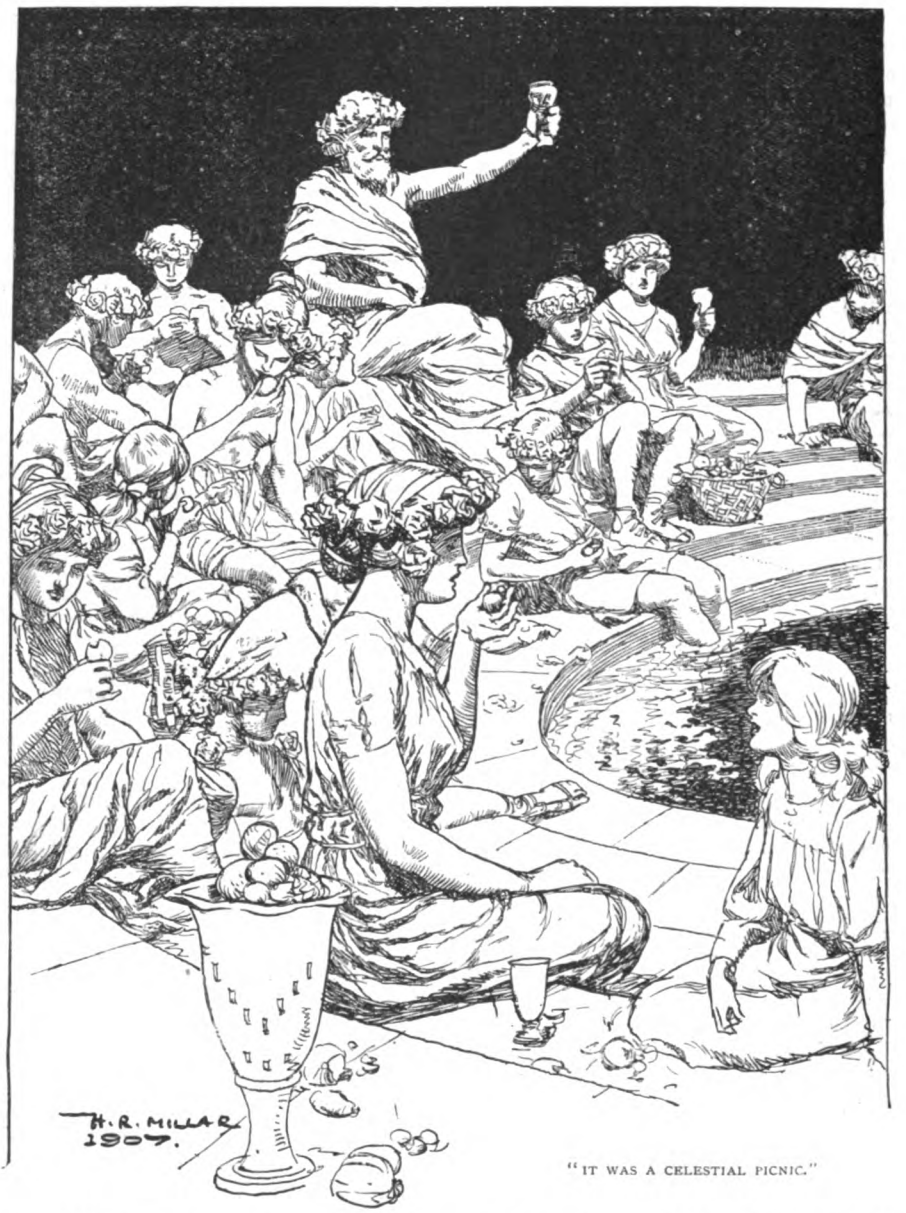
"You will, though," said Eros, a really nice boy, as the girls instantly agreed. "You've only got to pick it."

"Like this," said Psyche, lifting her marble arm to a willow branch. She reached out her hand to the children; it held a ripe pomegranate.

"I see," said Mabel. "You just——" She laid her fingers to the willow branch, and the firm softness of a big peach was within them.

"Yes, just that!" laughed Psyche, who was a darling; anyone could see that.

After this Hebe gathered a few silver baskets from a convenient alder, and the four picked fruit industriously. Meanwhile the elder statues were busy plucking golden goblets and jugs and dishes from the branches of ash trees and young oaks, and filling them with everything nice to eat and drink that anyone could possibly want, and these were spread on the steps. It was a celestial picnic. Then everyone sat or lay down, and the feast began. And, oh! the taste of the food served on those dishes, the sweet wonder of the drink that melted from those gold cups on the white lips of the company! And the fruit! There is no fruit like it grown on earth, just as there is no laughter like the laughter of those lips;



"IT WAS A CELESTIAL PICNIC."

no songs like the songs that starred the silence of that night of wonder.

"Oh!" cried Kathleen, through her fingers—the juice of her third peach fell like tears on the marble steps—"I do wish the boys were here!"

"I do wonder what they're doing?" said Mabel.

"At this moment," said Hermes, who had just made a wide ring of flight, as a pigeon does, and come back into the circle—"at this moment they are wandering desolately near the home of the dinosaurus, having escaped from their home by a window, in search of you. They fear that you have perished, and they would weep if they did not know that tears do not become a man, however youthful."

Kathleen stood up and brushed the crumbs of ambrosia from her marble lap.

"Thank you all very much," she said; "it was very kind of you to have us, and we've enjoyed ourselves very much; but I think we ought to go now, please."

"If it is anxiety about your brothers," said Phœbus, obligingly, "it wouldn't take a moment for them to join you. Lend me your ring a moment." He took it from Kathleen's half-reluctant hand, dipped it in the reflection of one of the seven moons, and gave it back. She clutched it. "Now," said the Sun God, "wish for them that which Mabel wished for herself. Say——"

"I know," Kathleen interrupted. "I wish that the boys may be statues of living marble like Mabel and me till dawn, and afterwards be like they are now."

"If you hadn't interrupted . . . . " said Phœbus; "but there, we can't expect old heads on shoulders of young marble. You should have wished them *here*, and—but no matter. Hermes, old chap, cut across and fetch them, and explain things as you go."

Once more he borrowed the ring and dipped it again in one of the reflected moons before he gave it back to Kathleen.

"There," he said, "now it's washed clean, ready for the next magic."

Hermes seemed to have "explained everything" quite fully, for when Jimmy and Gerald, in marble whiteness, arrived, each clinging to one of the god's winged feet and so borne through the air, they were instantly quite at ease. They made their best bows to the goddesses and took their places as unembarrassed as though they had had Olympian suppers every night of their lives. Hebe had woven wreaths of roses ready for them, and as Kathleen watched them eating and drinking, perfectly at home in their marble, she was very glad that amid the welling springs of immortal peach-juice she had not forgotten her brothers.

"And now," said Hebe, when the boys had been supplied with everything they could possibly desire and more than they could possibly eat—"now for the story."

"Yes," said Mabel, intensely, and Kathleen said—"Oh, *yes;* now for the story. How splendid!"

"The story," said Phœbus, unexpectedly, "will be told by our guests."

"Oh, *no*," said Kathleen, shrinking, "we want *you* to tell *us*."

"To tell you——?"

"How you come to be alive, and how you know about the ring—and everything you *do* know."

"Everything I know?" Phœbus laughed—it was to him that she had spoken—and not his lips only, but all the white lips, curled in laughter. "The span of your life, my earth-child, would not contain the words I should speak, to tell you all I know."

"Well, about the ring, anyhow, and how you come alive," said Gerald; "you see, it's very puzzling to us."

"Tell them, Phœbus," said the dearest lady in the world; "don't tease the children."

So Phœbus, leaning back against a heap of leopard-skins that Dionysos had lavishly plucked from a spruce fir, told.

"All statues," he said, "can come alive when the moon shines, if they so choose. But statues that are placed in ugly cities do not choose. Why should they weary themselves with the contemplation of the hideous?"

"Quite so," said Gerald, politely, to fill the pause.

"In your beautiful temples," the Sun God went on, "the images of your warriors, who lie cross-legged on their tombs, come alive and walk in their marble, both about their temples and through the woods and fields. But only on one night in all the year can any see them. You have beheld us because you hold the ring, or are of one brotherhood with us, in your marble; but on that one night all may behold us."

"And when is that?" Gerald asked, again polite, in a pause.

"At the festival of the harvest," said Phœbus. "On that night as the moon rises it strikes one beam of perfect light on to the altar in certain temples. One of these temples is in Hellas, buried under the fall of a mountain which Zeus, being angry, hurled down upon it. One is in this land—it is in this great garden."

"Then," said Gerald, much interested, "if we were to come up to that temple on that night we could see you even without being statues, or having the ring?"

"Even so," said Phœbus. "Any question asked by a mortal we are, on that night, bound to answer."

"And the night is—when?"

"Ah!" said Phœbus, and laughed, "wouldn't you like to know?"

Then the great marble King of the gods yawned, shook his long beard, and said, "Enough of stories, Phœbus. Tune your lyre."

"But the ring," said Mabel, in a whisper, as the Sun God tuned the white strings of a sort of marble harp that lay at his feet, "about how you know all about the ring."

"Presently," the Sun God whispered back. "Zeus must be obeyed—but ask me again before dawn and I will tell you all I know of it."

Mabel drew back, and leaned against the comfortable knees of one Ceres; Kathleen and Psyche sat holding hands; Gerald and Jimmy lay at full length, chins on elbows, gazing at the Sun God — for as he held the lyre, before even his fingers began to sweep the strings, the spirit of music hung in the air, enchanting, enslaving, silencing all thought but the thought of itself—all desire but the desire to listen to it.

Then Phœbus struck the strings, and softly plucked melody from them, and all the beautiful dreams of all the world came fluttering close with wings like doves' wings, and all the lovely thoughts that sometimes hover near, but not so near that you can catch them, now came home as to their nests in the hearts of those who listened; and those who listened forgot time and space and how to be sad and how to be naughty, and it seemed that the whole world lay like a magic apple in the hand of each listener, and that the whole world was good and beautiful.

"HE SPRANG UP, CRYING: 'THE DAWN, THE DAWN! TO YOUR PEDESTALS, O GODS!'"

And then, suddenly, the spell was shattered. Phœbus struck a broken chord, followed by an instant of silence, then he sprang up, crying: "The dawn, the dawn! To your pedestals, O gods!"

In an instant the whole crowd of beautiful marble people had leapt to its feet, had rushed through the belt of wood that cracked and rustled as they went, and the children heard them plash in the water beyond. They heard, too, the gurgling breathing of a great beast, and knew that the dinosaurus, too, was returning to his own place.

Only Hermes had time, since one flies more swiftly than one swims, to hover above them for one moment, and to whisper with a mischievous laugh, "In fourteen days from now, at the Temple of Strange Stones."

"What's the secret of the ring?" gasped Mabel.

"The ring is the heart of the magic," said Hermes. "Ask at the moon-rise on the fourteenth day and you shall know all."

With that he waved the snowy caduceus and rose in the air supported by his winged feet.

And as he went the seven reflected moons died out. A grey light grew and grew, and a chill wind began to blow. The birds stirred and twittered, and the marble slid away from the four children like a skin that shrivels in fire, and they were statues no more, but flesh-and-blood children as they used to be, standing knee-deep in a tangle of brambles and long coarse grass. There were no marble steps, no smooth lawn, no seven-mooned fish-pond. The dew lay thick on the grass and the brambles, and it was very cold.

"We ought to have gone with them," said Mabel, with chattering teeth. "We can't swim now we're not marble. And I suppose this *is* the island?"

It was, and they couldn't swim!

The dawn grew brighter, and the outlook more black, every moment.

"Can't anyone think of anything?" Gerald asked, shivering.

"When they find we've disappeared they'll drag all the water for miles round," said Jimmy, hopefully, "in case we've fallen in and sunk to the bottom. When they come to drag this we can yell, and be rescued."

"Yes, dear, that *will* be nice," was Gerald's bitter comment.

"Don't be so disagreeable," said Mabel, with a tone so strangely cheerful that the rest stared at her in amazement.

"The ring," she said. "Of course, we've only got to wish ourselves home with it. Phœbus washed it in the moon ready for the next wish."

"You didn't tell us about that," said Gerald, in accents of perfect good temper. "Never mind. Where *is* the ring?"

"*You* had it," Mabel reminded Kathleen.

"I know I had," said that child, in stricken tones; "but I gave it to Psyche to look at, and—and she's got it on her finger."

Everyone tried not to be angry with Kathleen. All partly succeeded.

"If we ever get off this beastly island," said Gerald, "I suppose you can find Psyche's statue and get it off again?"

"No, I can't," Mabel moaned. "I don't know where her statue is. I've never seen it. It may be in Hellas, or somewhere, for anything *I* know."

No one had anything kind to say, and it is pleasant to record that nobody said anything. And now it was grey daylight, and the sky to the north was flushing in pale pink and lavender. The boys stood moodily, hands in pockets. Mabel and Kathleen seemed to find it impossible not to cling together. And all about their legs the long grass was icy with dew.

A faint sniff and a caught breath broke the silence.

"Now, look here," said Gerald, briskly, "I won't have it. Do you hear? Snivelling's no good at all. No, I'm not a pig. It's for your own good. Let's make a tour of the island. Perhaps there's a boat hidden somewhere among the overhanging boughs."

Down-heartedly, and quite sure that there wasn't and couldn't be any boat, the four children started to explore the island.

They stumbled through the wood to the edge of the water, but it was impossible to keep close to the edge of the island. The branches grew too thickly. There was a narrow grassy path that wound in and out among the trees, and this they followed, dejected and mournful. Every moment made it less possible for them to hope to get back to the school house unnoticed. And if they were missed and beds found in their present unslept-in state—well, there would be a row of some sort, and, as Gerald said, "Farewell to liberty."

"Come, buck up," said Gerald, the spirit of the born general beginning to reawaken in him, "we shall get out of this scrape all right, as we've got out of others. You know we shall. See, the sun's coming out. You feel all right and jolly now, don't you?"

"Yes; oh, yes," said everyone, in tones of unmixed misery.

The sun was now risen, and through a deep cleft in the hills it sent a strong shaft of light straight at the island. The yellow light, almost level, struck through the stems of the trees and dazzled the children's eyes. This, with the fact that he was not looking where he was going, as Jimmy did not fail to point out later, was enough to account for what now happened to Gerald, who was leading the melancholy little procession. He stumbled, clutched at a tree trunk—missed the clutch, and disappeared with a yell and a clatter, and Mabel, who came next, only pulled herself up just in time not to fall down a steep flight of moss-grown steps that seemed to open suddenly in the ground at her feet.

"Oh, Gerald," she called down the steps, "are you hurt?"

"No," said Gerald, out of sight and crossly, for he *was* hurt rather severely; "it's steps, and there's a passage."

"There always is," said Jimmy.

"I knew there was a passage," said Mabel. "It goes under the water and comes out at the Temple of Flora. Even the gardeners know that, but they won't go down for fear of snakes."

"Then we can get out that way—I do think you might have said so," Gerald's voice came up to say.

"I didn't think of it," said Mabel—"at least . . . And I suppose it goes past the place where the Ugly Wugly found its good hotel."

"I'm not going," said Kathleen, positively, "not in the dark, I'm not, so I tell you."

"Very well, baby," said Gerald, sternly, and his head appeared from below very suddenly through interlacing brambles. "No one asked you to go in the dark. We'll leave you here if you like, and return and rescue you with a boat. Jimmy, the bicycle lamp!" He reached up a hand for it.

Jimmy produced from his bosom—the place where lamps are always kept in fairy stories (see Aladdin and others)—a bicycle lamp.

"We brought it," he explained, "so as not to break our shins over bits of long Mabel among the rhododendrons."

"Now," said Gerald, very firmly, striking a

match and opening the thick rounded glass front of the bicycle-lamp. "I don't know what the rest of you are going to do, but I'm going down these steps and along this passage. If we find the good hotel . . . well, a good hotel never hurt anyone yet."

"It's no good, you know," said Jimmy, weakly; "you know jolly well you can't get out of that Temple of Flora door—even if you get *to* it."

"I *don't* know," said Gerald, still brisk and commander-like. "There's a secret spring inside that door, most likely. We hadn't a lamp last time to look for it, remember."

"If there's one thing I do hate it's underground ness," said Mabel.

"*You're* not a coward," said Gerald, with what is known as diplomacy. "*You're* brave, Mabel. Don't I know it? You hold Jimmy's hand and I'll hold Cathy's. Now then."

"I won't have *my* hand held," said Jimmy, of course; "I'm not a kid."

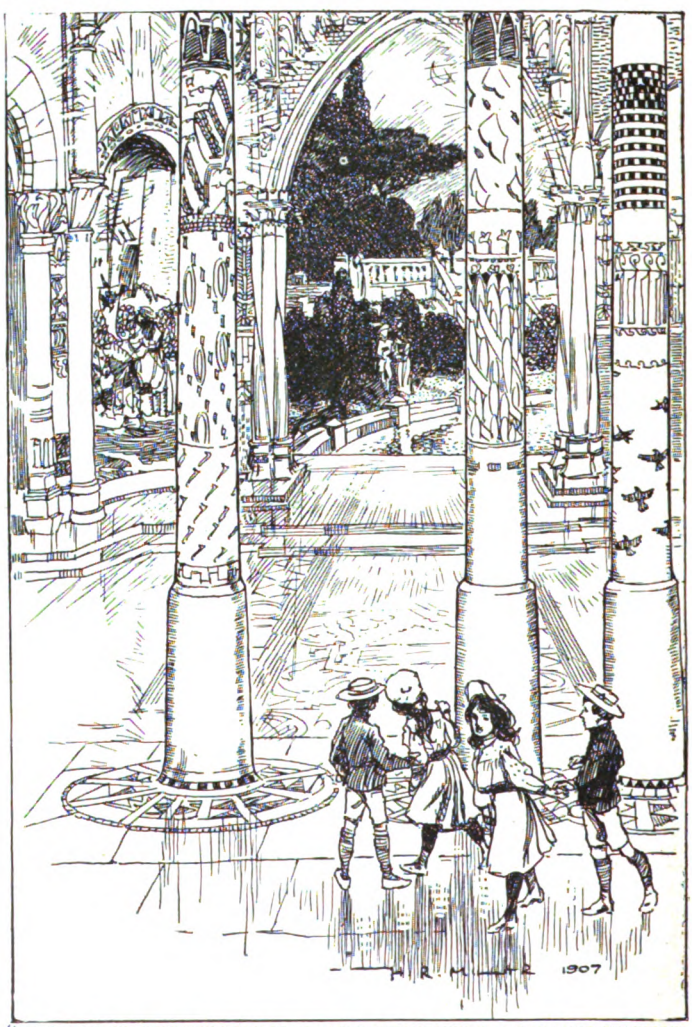
"Well, Cathy will. Poor little Cathy. Nice brother Jerry'll hold poor Cathy's hand."

Gerald's bitter sarcasm missed fire here, for Kathleen gratefully caught the hand he held out in mockery. She was too miserable to read his mood as she mostly did. "Oh, thank you, Jerry, dear," she said, gratefully; "you *are* a dear, and I *will* try not to be frightened." And for quite a minute Gerald shamedly felt that he had not been quite, quite kind.

So now, leaving the growing goldness of the sunrise, the four went down the stone steps that led to the underground — and the under-water—passage, and everything seemed to grow dark, and then to grow into a poor pretence of light again as the splendour of dawn gave place to the small dogged lighting of the bicycle lamp. The steps did indeed lead to a passage, the beginning of it choked with the drifted dead leaves of many old autumns. But presently the passage took a turn, there were more steps, down, down, and then the passage was empty and straight, lined above and below on each side with slabs of marble very clear and clean. Gerald held Cathy's hand with more of kindness and less of exasperation than he had supposed possible.

And Cathy on her part was surprised to find it possible to be so much less frightened than she expected.

The gleam of the bull's-eye threw ahead a soft circle of misty light. The children followed it till, silently and suddenly, the light of the bull's-eye behaved as the flame of a candle does when you take it out into the sunlight to light a bonfire or explode



"THIS HALL IN WHICH THE CHILDREN FOUND THEMSELVES WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN THE WORLD."

a train of gunpowder, or what not, because now, with feelings mixed indeed, of wonder, and interest, and awe, but no fear, the children found themselves in a great hall, whose arched roof was held up by two rows of round pillars, and whose every corner was filled with a soft, searching, lovely light, a light filling every cranny, as water fills the rocky secrecies of hidden sea-caves.

"How beautiful!" Kathleen whispered, breathing hard into the tickled ear of her brother, and Mabel caught the hand of Jimmy, and whispered, "I must hold your hand; I must hold on to something silly, or I sha'n't believe it's real."

This hall in which the children found themselves was the most beautiful place in the world. I won't describe it, because it does not look the same to any two people, and you wouldn't understand me if I tried to tell you how it looked to any one of these four. But to each it seemed the most perfect thing possible. I will only say that all round it were great arches—Kathleen saw them as Moorish, Mabel as Tudor, Gerald as Norman, and Jimmy as Churchwarden-Gothic. (If you don't know what these are, ask your uncle who collects brasses and he will explain; or, perhaps, Mr. Millar will draw the different kinds of arches for you.) And through these arches one could see many things—oh, but many things. Through one appeared an olive garden, and in it two lovers who held each other's hands under an Italian moon; through another a wild sea, and a ship to whom the wild, racing sea was slave. A third showed a King on his throne, his courtiers obsequious about him; and yet a fourth showed—a really good hotel, with the respectable Ugly Wugly sunning himself on the front doorsteps. There was a mother, bending over a wooden cradle. There was an artist gazing entranced on the picture his wet brush seemed to have that moment completed—a general dying on a field where victory had planted the standard he loved: and these things were not pictures, but the truest truth—alive and, as anyone could see, immortal.

"Oh, I am glad we came—I am, I am," Kathleen murmured, and held fast to her brother's hand.

They went slowly up the hall, the ineffectual bull's-eye held by Jimmy, very crooked indeed, showing almost as a shadow in this big glorious light.

And then, when the hall's end was almost reached, the children saw where the light came from. It glowed and spread itself from one place, and in that place stood the one statue that Mabel "did not know where to find"—the statue of Psyche. They went on slowly, quite happy, quite bewildered. And when they came close to Psyche they saw that on her raised hand the ring showed dark.

Gerald let go Kathleen's hand, put his foot on the pediment, his knee on the pedestal. He stood up, dark and human beside the white girl with the butterfly wings.

"I do hope you don't mind," he said, and drew the ring off very gently.

Then, as he dropped to the ground, "Not here," he said. "I don't know why, but not here."

And they all passed behind the white Psyche, and once more the bicycle lamp seemed suddenly to come to life again as Gerald held it in front of him, to be the pioneer in the dark passage that led from the Hall of . . . but they did not know, then, what it was the Hall of.

Then, as the twisting passage shut in on them with a darkness that pressed close against the little light of the bicycle-lamp, Kathleen said—"Give me the ring; I know exactly what to say."

Gerald gave it, with not extreme readiness.

"I wish," said Kathleen, slowly, "that no one at home may know that we've been out to-night; and I wish we were safe in our own beds, undressed, and in our nightgowns and asleep."

And the next thing any of them knew it was good, strong, ordinary daylight—not just sunrise, but the kind of daylight you are used to being called in—and each was in its own bed. Kathleen had framed the wish most sensibly. The only mistake had been in saying "in our own beds," because, of course, Mabel's own bed was at Yalding Towers; and to this day Mabel's drab-haired aunt cannot understand how Mabel, who was staying the night with that child in the town she was so taken up with, hadn't come home at eleven when the aunt locked up, and yet was in her bed in the morning. For, though not a clever woman, she was not stupid enough to be able to believe any one of the eleven fancy explanations which the distracted Mabel offered in the course of the morning. The first (which makes twelve) of these explanations was The Truth, and, of course, the aunt was far too clever to believe that!

(To be continued.)

CURIOSITIES.

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

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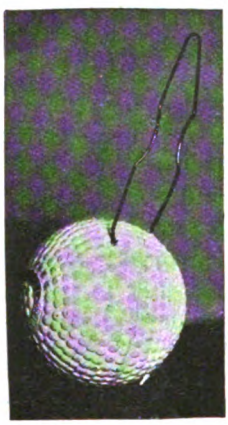
TWO REMARKABLE GOLFING INCIDENTS.

MR. R. ANDREW, the well-known West of Scotland amateur golfer, was playing over the old Troon course on a recent Saturday, the occasion being the Hillhouse Cup Competition. As he was the winner of the cup last year, it was expected that he would make a big effort to retain the trophy, but his chances were extinguished in the most extraordinary manner. Playing to the twelfth hole, Mr. Andrew's ball landed on to the points of a lady's hair-pin, which seems to have been sticking into the ground head downwards. On reaching the spot, it was found that the hair-pin was firmly embedded into the core! As there was no rule bearing on the point, Mr. Andrew proceeded to hole out with the pin still adhering to the ball—a feat which proved exceedingly difficult. Once on the green the ball proceeded to spin round about as every attempt was made to get it down, and as a result Mr. Andrew took six shots on the green! Needless to say, such an extraordinary incident ruined his chances of success. It may be mentioned that the Ladies' Championship was decided over this course during the week, and doubtless Mr. Andrew will preserve this memento of the contest.—Mr. T. H. Andrew, 35, Main Street, Prestwich, Ayr, N.B. Photograph by Mr. Donaldson, Glasgow.



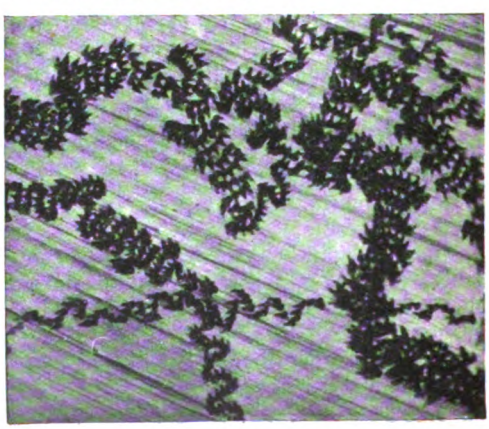
YET another hair-pin became attached to a golf-ball, as shown in the second photograph, during match play on the links of the Bradford Moor Golf Club a few weeks ago, on the occasion of the formal opening of the club house and links, and was driven by the Shipley professional (H. Loveridge), who was not allowed to remove the obstruction until he had holed out, at a cost of seven strokes, five of which were putts on the green. The pin was too firmly embedded to be knocked out by a club during play.—Mr. H. Somers, 6, Westfield Crescent, Undercliffe, Bradford.

A PIONEER MOTOR-CAR.

THE photograph next given shows what is believed to be the first automobile or steam carriage built in America. The automobile industry, which is young even in England, is still younger in the United States. The motor-carriage shown here was only built in 1890, and if it were placed beside a modern touring car it would show the great contrast and the evolution of motor-car building in a comparatively short period. This steam-car develops about one horse-power, and can be steered from either front or back seats. It was used by the inventor successfully during his travels in Canada and the United States, and, imperfect as it was, it ran many hundred miles.—Mr. Max A. R. Brünner, Gneisenaustrasse 89, Berlin, S.W.

A SNAILS "FOOT"-PRINTS.

THE following photograph may puzzle your readers. It is not the pattern left by frost on a window, but the "foot"-prints of a snail which has crawled over the freshly-whitened panes of a hot-house, and left his "signature" indelibly printed on the whitewash.—Mr. M. D. Haviland, Norlands, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny.



WHERE EAST MEETS WEST.

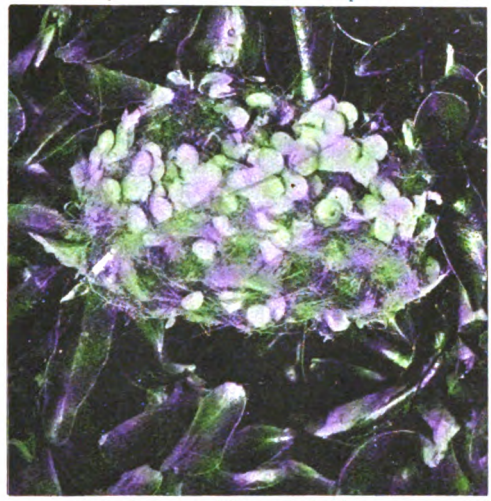
HERE is a photograph taken by myself in a Japanese railway station which may be interesting, as it shows to what extent the Japanese are copying Western methods. Nor are these eyesores confined to their railway stations, as they may be seen scattered about the country almost wherever one goes. —Lieut. N. E. Iremonger, R.N., H.M.S. *Astræa*, China Station.

A CANDLE-SMOKE PICTURE.

MY photograph represents a china plaque fourteen inches in diameter. The picture is made entirely from the smoke of a candle. This work was exhibited in the Royal Society of Artists, Birmingham, a few years ago. It has been made durable, and is likely to last as long as a painting. It can be washed and cleaned. The picture is entitled "Evening."—Mr. T. H. Meitham, 123, Alexandra Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

A CONFETTI-COVERED NEST.

THE nest reproduced in the next photograph is like Joseph's coat—made up of many colours. It was built by a pair of chaffinches and is composed of moss and confetti, the latter adhering so firmly to the moss that it is impossible to shake it off. Such an occurrence is very rare, if not unique in the history of nest-building, and entirely upsets the theory of birds building only with materials which harmonize with the surroundings. When only partly built the nest was found by a young lady whilst gathering ivy leaves from an old wall, and, although a great many people passed and repassed it daily, the parent birds worked so stealthily that the nest was completed and the



brood successfully reared without a second person discovering it or having even the slightest suspicion of its existence. It has been suggested by an expert that the chaffinches made use of a newly-spun spider's web—before it had set hard—to fasten the confetti to the moss.—Mr. G. W. Rowlands, Clevedon, Somerset.

A HIBERNATING PIG.

I AM enclosing you a snap-shot of a pig that was accidentally buried beneath a straw stack while threshing last November and was not discovered until the middle of May, a period of over six months. The animal is still alive and, apart from his loss of flesh, is very little the worse for his enforced hibernation.—Mr. G. B. Murphy, Carberry, Manitoba.

	Hearts—Knave, 4. Clubs—Ace, 3. Diamonds— Spades—7, 6.	
Hearts—Queen, 9. Clubs—Knave, 8. Diamonds—Knave, 6. Spades—	B Y Z A	Hearts—10, 5, 3. Clubs—6. Diamonds—Queen, 7. Spades—
	Hearts—Ace, king, 6. Clubs—10. Diamonds—10, 9. Spades—	

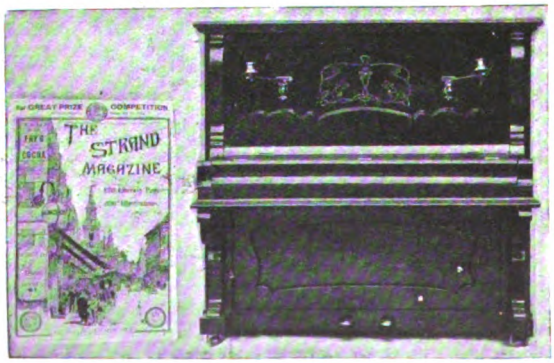
Spades are trumps. A to lead. A B to win all the six tricks in spite of anything Y Z can do to stop them.

A BEAUTIFUL BRIDGE PROBLEM.

THE best double-dummy problem ever devised is, there is little question, the eight-card problem which we published in our May number. But the following beautiful little problem, in which each player holds six cards, runs it very close. Indeed, it can only be considered inferior in the fact that, the cards being fewer, the variations are of necessity less complex. The ingenuity displayed on the part of the composer is really quite as remarkable, while the skill demanded in order to arrive at the correct solution is very little less. This unique composition is sometimes called the "Proctor Problem," from the fact that the late Richard Proctor, the well-known astronomer and writer on whist, is said to have solved it in twelve minutes—an easy record, and one which even the readers of this magazine may find some difficulty in beating. The problem, like the former, is the composition of Mr. Whitfeld, the Card Editor of the *Field*, by whose kind permission it is here reproduced, and has been reprinted in "Bridge Problems," edited by E. Bergholt. We shall publish the solution next month.

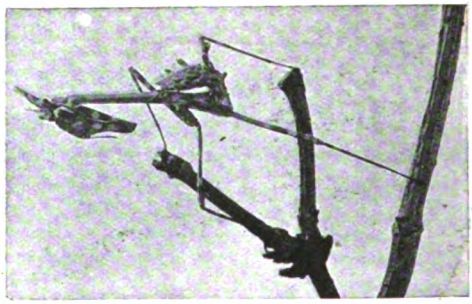
A MINIATURE PIANO.

I SEND you a photograph of a miniature pianoforte which I have just completed, after eighteen months, in my spare time. The compass is two and a quarter octaves (twenty-eight notes), height twelve and a half inches, width thirteen and three-quarter inches. Every part is made exactly as a modern piano, with the exception of an iron frame, and is tuned up to concert pitch. It is polished Chippendale colour. I think it is the smallest piano made—strung and with action and keys.—Mr. G. Slade, 76A, Geldeston Road, Upper Clapton, N. E.



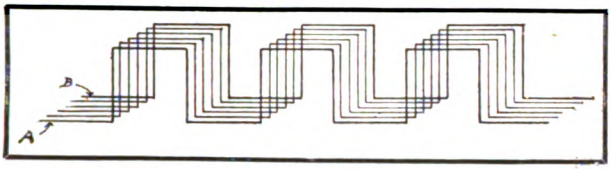
THE CAMERA CANNOT LIE!

I SEND you a photograph of what seems an impossible jump. It has somewhat mystified my friends. Those who understand photography think it is a "double print," but it is not. The extraordinary result is explained by the fact that I took the leap while standing on the top bar of a five-foot gate.—Mr. S. Lilley, 8, Offa Road, South End, Bedford.



A PIOUS FRAUD.

THE foregoing illustration shows the wonderful attitude taken up by a very curious insect. It often hangs on a twig and raises its front legs as in an attitude of devotion, hence its name of "The Praying Mantis." This habit has earned for it the reputation of being a most holy insect, and many superstitions are attached to it in all parts of the world where it is found. A French naturalist of the seventeenth century says: "This little creature is considered of so divine a nature that, to a child who asks it its way, it points it out by stretching out one of its legs, and never has it been known to send a child astray." Its attitude is really one of wakeful watchfulness, and should a fly or other insect settle near it, deceived by its motionless pose and resemblance to the twigs on which it rests, it is quickly caught between the front legs and carried to the creature's mouth to be eaten. The insect is common in the South of France.—Mr. Hugh Main, Almondale, Buckingham Road, South Woodford, N.E.

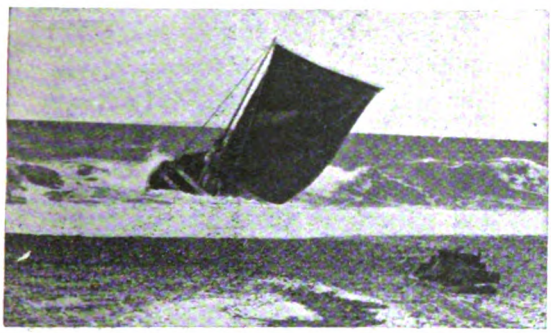


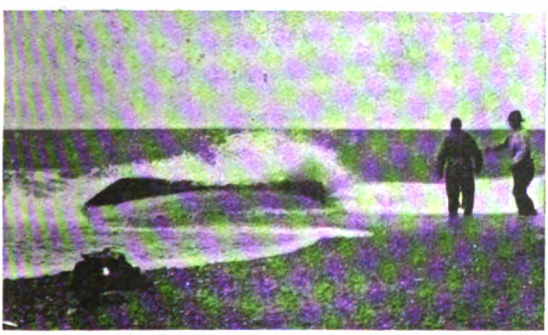
AN OPTICAL ILLUSION.

ON first glancing a the above drawing it would appear as if the arches ran from left to right (from lines A to B), but by taking B as the front and A as the back the arches appear to run from right to left. In other words, the spectator, looking through the archways, sees the left-hand sides of them in the first case, and the right-hand sides in the second.—Mr. Thomas Etchells, 12, Manley Street, Higher Broughton, Manchester.

THE JUTLAND FISHERMAN'S PLIGHT.

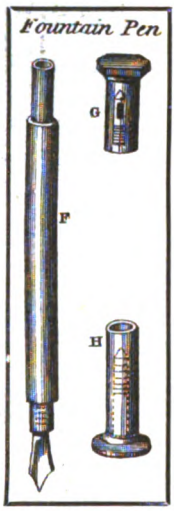
I SEND you a couple of snap-shots taken on the coast of Jutland, illustrating the hardships of local fishermen owing to the total absence of a harbour along the whole western coast of Jutland, and were it not for their hardiness and courage the humble fisherfolk would be hard put to find even the wherewithal for a meal. The fisherman sails to the fishing grounds, as far as thirty miles away from his native land, in a small open boat. Should the weather be stormy on his return he will find it impossible to land. The first photograph shows one of these small boats endeavouring to land through the breakers, notwithstanding the storm; the other shows the result of the attempt. The boat has overturned, snapping the mast, and it is only by a happy accident that the men are standing alive on the beach. — Mr. P. Chr. Myhlertx, Holte, Denmark.





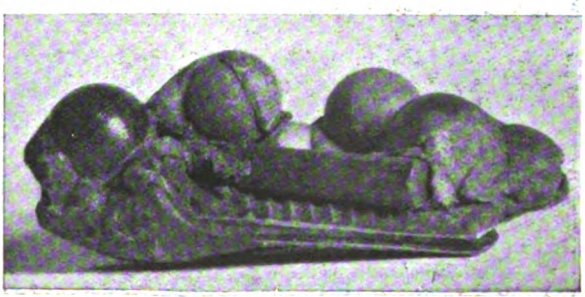
THE FOUNTAIN PEN OF OUR FOREFATHERS.

THE following description and facsimile diagram of a fountain pen (so named) are taken from Hutton's Mathematical Dictionary, published in 1795, and well illustrates the familiar saying that there is nothing new under the sun. "Fountain Pen is a pen contrived to contain a quantity of ink, and let it flow very gently, so as to supply the writer a long time without the necessity of taking fresh ink. The fountain pen represented (Fig. 8, Pl. XI.) consists of divers pieces of metal, F, G, H, the middle piece F carrying the pen, which is screwed into the inside of a little pipe; and this again is soldered into another pipe of the same size as the lid G; in which lid is soldered a male screw for screwing on the cover, as also for stopping a little hole at the place and hindering the ink from passing through it; at the other end of the piece F is a little pipe, on the outside of which may be screwed the top cover H. A porte-craion goes in the cover, to be screwed into the last-mentioned pipe, to stop the end of the pipe into which the ink is to be poured by a funnel. To use the pen the cover G must be taken off, and the pen a little shaken to make the ink run more freely." The illustration represents part of a full-page collection of diagrams under the heading "Fountains."—Mr. A. A. Bourne, Bramleigh, Cheltenham.



FOUND IN A BOY'S POCKET.

THE following is a photograph of an object found in a schoolboy's pocket. It is composed of several marbles, a knife, a lead-pencil, several buttons, both bone and metal, and a slate-pencil (not seen in the print). All of them are set hard in a lump of chocolate. Several chocolate drops had been placed loose in the boy's pocket together with the other articles. The heat of his body caused the chocolate to become soft while mixed with the other objects, and when the clothes were taken off it set hard again, so forming this curious-looking object.—Mr. W. Cecil Wilkinson, 236, Crooksmoor Road, Sheffield.

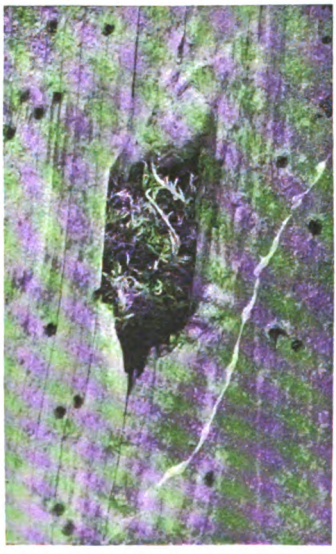


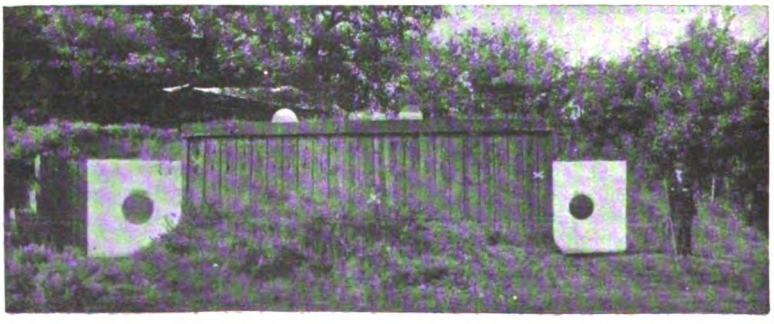
AN AMUSING OPTICAL ILLUSION.

THE amusing trick which is illustrated in the above photograph was performed in the following manner. The trousers and stockings were passed through the rollers of the mangle, while the boy was, of course, sitting at the back out of harm's way. Another boy stood by and turned the handle.—Mr. Fred Ollier, 2, Astbury Street, Congleton, Cheshire.

REARING A FAMILY UNDER RIFLE FIRE.

AT the butts on the Wigton (Cumberland) Volunteers' Rifle Range, in close proximity to the targets (as shown by the crosses on the second photograph) were the nests of a wren, tit, and yellow-hammer, but, although they were frequently under fire, the daring birds have succeeded in safely rearing their broods. The nearness of the birds to death is shown by the bullet-marks around the wren's nest in the first photograph. — Mr. R. S. Wilson, 4, South End, Wigton, Cumberland.

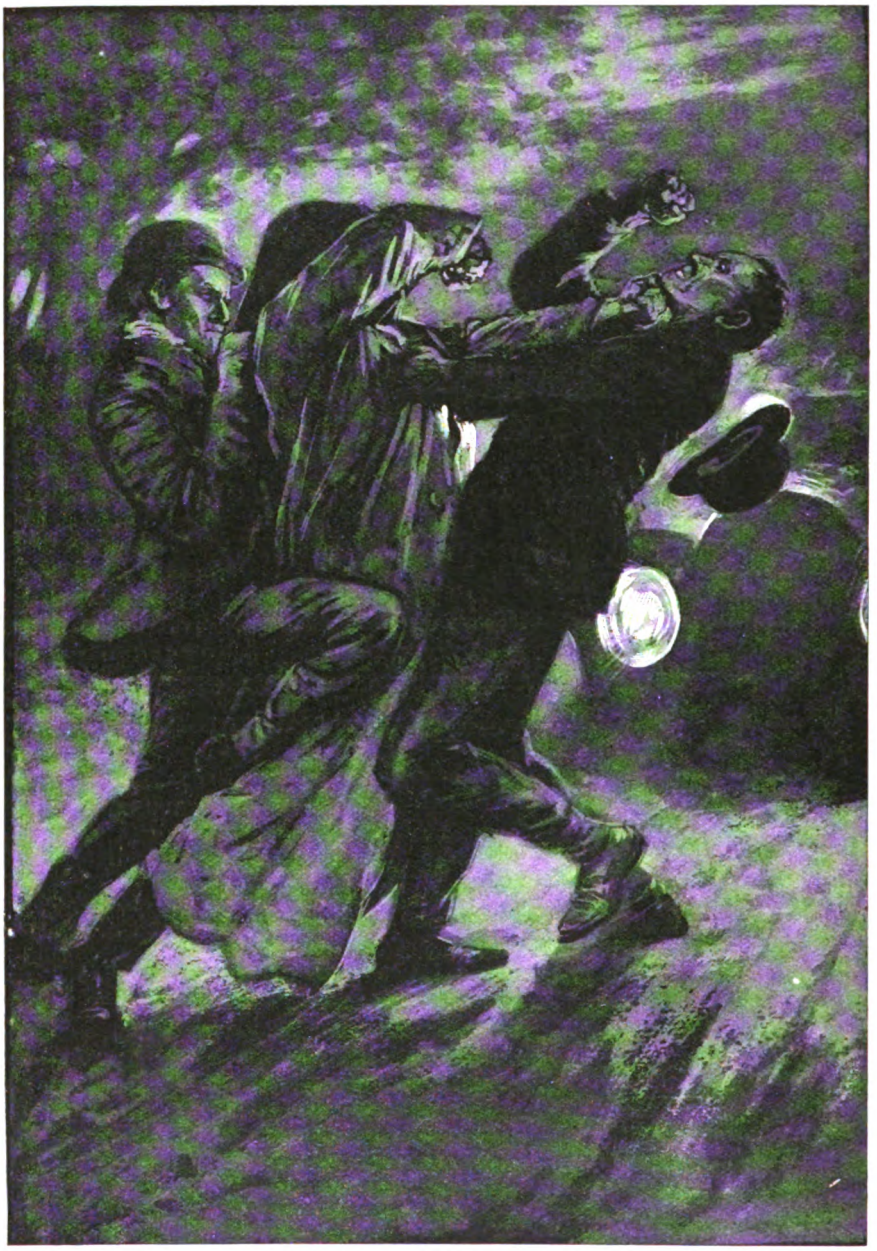




THE POWER OF A GROWING TREE.

THE following illustration is a most striking example of the tremendous power of a growing tree in overcoming what would seem to be insuperable obstacles in its path upwards. This example may be seen in Lansing, the capital of Michigan. It is on the thoroughfare which runs between the city and the State Agricultural College, at the side of the roadway, about midway between the two termini of the trolley-line. The story of the tree and the boulder is as follows. A good many years ago a tired and hungry traveller passed that

way, and seated himself upon the boulder to rest. From a neighbouring house he was lucky enough to obtain a substantial lunch, which, among other good things, included a quantity of ripe cherries. He sat and enjoyed the treat, the cherry-stones being dropped around on the ground; some, no doubt, fell into interstices in the rock and reached the ground underneath. At least one took root and began to insinuate its growth of small branches up through the crack by which it had reached the earth. It grew apace, and eventually the immense boulder has been "divided against itself" by the aggressive cherry tree, with its eighteen feet of circumference completely divided.—Mr. John McClelland Bulkley, Chamber of Commerce, Detroit, Michigan.



"HE FOUGHT DESPERATELY AND WITH THE SKILL OF A TRAINED BOXER."

(*See page* 372.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxxiv. OCTOBER, 1907. No. 202.

The Scarlet Runner.

BY C. N. AND A. M. WILLIAMSON,

Authors of "The Lightning Conductor," "My Friend the Chauffeur," etc.

XI.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE GOLD CIGARETTE-CASE.

CHRISTOPHER RACE could not make head or tail of it.

In the first place, the letter was not properly addressed, and it ought to have flattered his vanity that it had reached him at all. "Christopher Race, Motorist, London," was scrawled in pencil and in an uneducated hand on a common envelope; that, and nothing more; yet the powers that be in the Post Office had sent it to him without delay. This was a tribute to his fame, but it was not enlightening.

In the common envelope was a half-sheet of thick and creamy parchment paper with a monogram in pale blue and silver—a pretty monogram, but so intricate, consisting as it did of three letters, as to be almost impossible for an uninitiated person to decipher. On this half-sheet, written in a firm and somewhat original hand, which might be that of a man or a woman, were two sentences and part of another:—

"DEAR SIR,—I have heard of you and your car, and seen photographs of both. I know that you are a gentleman and can be trusted. I hope very much that you are free and can come here by Thursday, if possible early in the morning, as it is a matter of life and death to me, to——"

Here the letter broke off, giving no clue to the nature of the errand, or to the whereabouts of the nameless writer. But Christopher was able to make out the postmark. The scrawled envelope had been sent from Stoke d'Estcourt, Warwickshire.

Of course, he said to himself, there was nothing to do about it. Perhaps the thing was a hoax. Or perhaps the person who began the letter had changed his or her mind, and a servant, knowing something of the circumstances, had found the half-sheet of paper and mischievously posted it.

No, there was nothing to do; yet the last sentence haunted Christopher. He found himself constantly repeating it in his mind, and wondering whether his coming with Scarlet Runner really had been a matter of life and death to the writer. Again and again he pondered at the breaking off of that sentence which, if finished, might have explained all. He studied the monogram, and thought that it must mean "V. L. H."; and, though the handwriting was uncommonly strong for a woman, the monogram was essentially feminine.

The letter reached Christopher on a Wednesday.

It was a dull day of mid-November, and he had nothing to do.

Altogether, from telling himself that there was nothing to do in the affair of the unfinished letter, Christopher went in a few hours to the extreme of determining that he would do a great deal, and start off on a wild-goose chase after a client of whose name, sex, address, and intentions towards him he was equally ignorant.

Then he looked up Stoke d'Estcourt on his road map, and in a handbook of Warwickshire.

The handbook told him that Stoke d'Estcourt was a small but interesting hamlet about three miles from a railway station, and tourists were advised to visit the ruins of Kennerwick Castle in the neighbourhood.

The description encouraged Christopher in the somewhat wild idea that by going to Stoke d'Estcourt and making inquiries he might be able to find out who had sent him the unfinished letter. In such a small village everybody must know everybody else, or at least everybody else's affairs, and if he really had the detective talent for which he had lately gained credit in the New Forest, he ought to have a chance of testing it successfully. He would arrive at Stoke d'Estcourt in the evening, and if he could that night contrive to discover the name and whereabouts of his mysterious client he would still be in time to report himself, as desired, early on Thursday morning. The idea of doing

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this appealed to him intensely, both through his sense of humour and his fondness for adventure. It would be, he thought, as he flashed swiftly along the Banbury Road, very amusing as well as dramatic to draw up before the door of a house (as yet unknown to him) and calmly send in word (to whom it might concern) that Mr. Christopher Race had called with his car according to instructions received.

Somebody would be surprised, and pleased or displeased, as the case might be. And so charmed was Christopher with the blurred, mysterious, and piquant picture he conjured up of his arrival and reception—somewhere—that he made a bet with Christopher Race. He bet that, if he succeeded in finding the writer of the letter before ten o'clock on Thursday morning, he would give himself a present of an extravagantly handsome stop-watch he had lately seen and coveted. If he failed he would bestow the same sum of money in charity. There was, he believed, a fund for broken-down chauffeurs, and it should have the benefit of non-success.

His journey was uneventful, and it was early still in the murky evening when the blazing rays of his lamps illuminated the quaint old inn of which he had read in the guide-book. Welcoming lights, streaming through red blinds, seemed to speak of warmth and comfort within. He drove his car into a barn which had been converted into a garage, and engaged a bedroom.

The first thing he did while dinner was being prepared was to call for the local directory and pore over its pages in the hope of finding someone with the initials "V. L. H." But he was disappointed. The population of the village and the immediate neighbourhood was only a few hundreds; and among the Harrises, the Harboroughs, the Hickses, and the Harveys there was none who owned the initials "V. L."

He argued that, as the note-paper on which the letter was written was of good quality, and the monogram a dainty thing, the mysterious writer was probably a person of culture, perhaps of wealth; but the illiterate scrawl upon the common envelope introduced an element of confusion into his calculations. He was the only guest of the inn, and he called in the landlord to talk to him while he ate. He asked questions about the neighbourhood, and led his host on to tell of the village magnates and the "county families" whose houses lay near. Judging from the man's laconic accounts of them, they seemed to be the usual sort of people, with whose staid lives it was difficult to associate the idea of romance or mystery, and "affairs of life or death."

On arriving he had ostentatiously driven Scarlet Runner through the whole length of the village High Street and past the cottages and Queen Anne or Georgian houses which surrounded the famous green, thus advertising his advent to whom it might concern; and though the country air and strong ale made him sleepy, he sat up late pretending to read old numbers of magazines, in the hope of receiving a letter or word of some sort from his nameless correspondent.

"WELCOMING LIGHTS, STREAMING THROUGH RED BLINDS, SEEMED TO SPEAK OF WARMTH AND COMFORT WITHIN."

No word came, however; no sign was made to let him know that the person whose summons he had obeyed was aware of his presence. Still, the less hope of success that remained, the more Christopher rebelled against failure. He was up with the first grey hint of dawn. By seven o'clock he was dressed, and it was not yet eight when he had breakfasted and was

starting Scarlet Runner before the door of the inn.

He determined to drive slowly, temptingly, through every street of the village, and past the gates of the great houses and even farms of the surrounding country, weaving the car through from road to road, as his map made possible. Then, if the writer of that unfinished letter were waiting somewhere in the hope of a response to the broken appeal, he or she would not be disappointed, and—Christopher Race would win his bet with himself.

He sounded his new and singularly sweet-toned musical siren unnecessarily often, and faces peered out of cottage windows, and fresh-faced girls turned to look at him and his handsome red car in the village streets; but no one beckoned, no one called to him.

Here and there he caused his siren to discourse snatches from the opera of "La Traviata"; but when he came in sight of the ruined castle he forgot to play his own accompaniment—even forgot for a few moments the business which had brought him to Stoke d'Estcourt.

It really was a fine and striking ruin. Christopher drove very slowly, to take in its full magnificence, and finally stopped Scarlet Runner in the shadow of the dark, towering walls, though he did not stop her engine.

Looking up from his seat in the gently-purring car, the huge Norman keep loomed above him. From this point of view the massive shape of the castle showed no appearance of decay; and as Christopher's lively imagination pictured moving figures in grand costumes and gleaming armour, suddenly there was framed in a small, ivy-draped window a face as lovely as any for which a knight of old ever did battle.

A girl was gazing down at him—a girl whose yellow-brown hair was bright gold against a background of darkness. Christopher had just time to catch an impression of a beautiful face, white and large-eyed with terror, or some other emotion strange for a peaceful English morning; and then an extraordinary thing happened. The large eyes met his in appeal: the lips opened without speaking; a hand and arm were thrust through the aperture, and something small, that glittered as it fell, was thrown to him.

The thing, whatever it was, was flung with a woman's aim, and, instead of reaching its intended destination, landed noiselessly in a clump of dead grasses and nettles by the roadside.

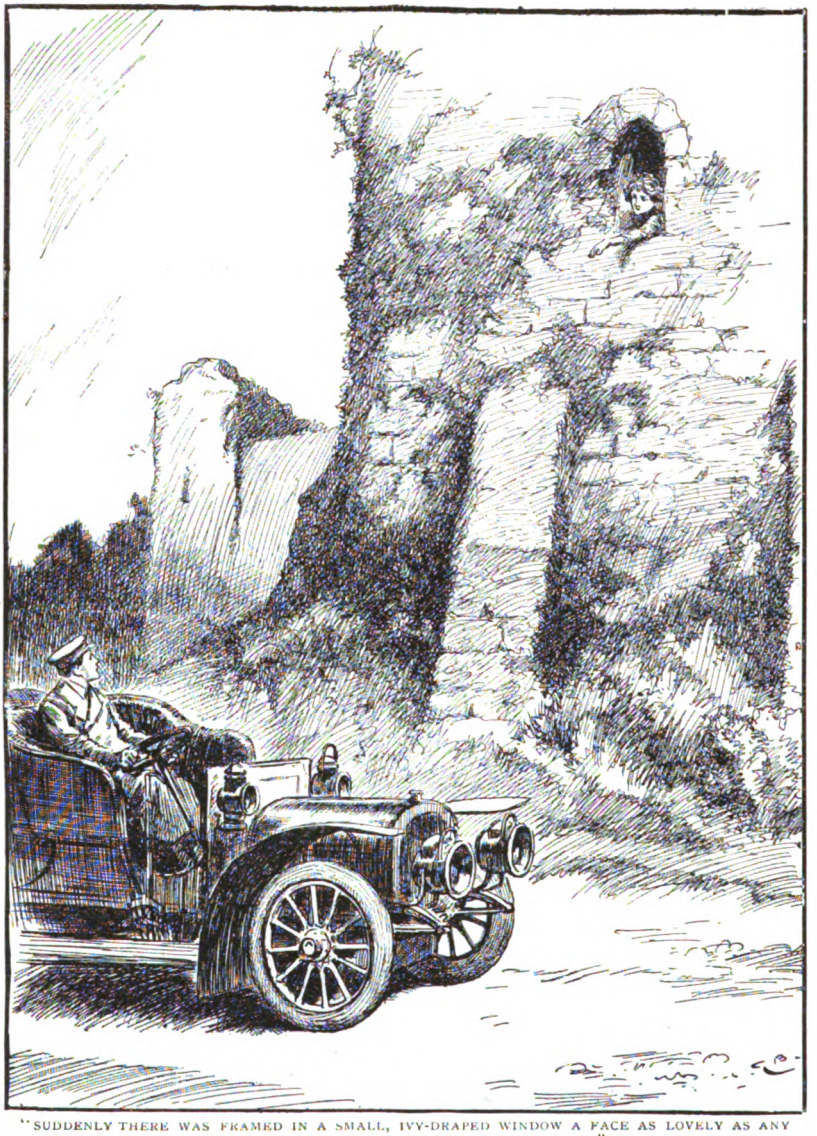
Instantly Christopher was out of the car. Without minding the nettles' sting, he thrust his hand and arm deep among rough stems and prickly leaves, coming almost immediately upon the object of his search, which his touch told him must be a metal case for visiting-cards or cigarettes. Before his eyes had a chance to inform him further, a low, inarticulate cry from the window made him, still stooping over the bed of nettles, lift his head to look up. The girl, silent after the one faint sound which had drawn his eyes again to her, was signing eagerly for him to mount and ride away.

Astonished, but ready to obey a lady's command no matter how strange, Christopher sprang into the quivering car, and taking off the brakes put on a speed which sent Scarlet Runner flying along the road like a red arrow.

It was not until the first turn, when the castle towers were hidden from sight by an intervening hill, that Race slackened the car's pace and looked at the thing which the girl had thrown to him. Then he saw that it was a handsome gold cigarette-case, ornamented with the letters "M. N." in diamonds.

Completely puzzled, Christopher stopped for a moment in the empty road to satisfy his curiosity by examining the cigarette-case inside as well as out. There was nothing in it, not even a cigarette; but there was one peculiarity which caused Christopher to jump at the conclusion that the thing had been made by special order, and for a lady. The inner part of the case was entirely covered on one side with a mirror, set into the gold and surrounded by a frame of tiny brilliants, thus leaving space for cigarettes on the opposite side only. The fall had cracked the glass across, and the loose bits would have fallen out if Christopher had not closed up the case, fastening it with a snap. He then put the dainty little affair into his pocket and drove along his intended route, in almost hopeless quest of "V. L. H."

His first thought on seeing the girl at the window of the castle keep was that he had found "V. L. H."—that "V. L. H." had been waiting there for him, in the hope of a rescue, like some persecuted damsel of old. But, though she had certainly flung him a gage, she had shown no desire to put herself under his protection. On the contrary, she had expressed in vivid pantomime her wish that he should leave her as quickly as he could. And then, the initials on the cigarette-case did not connect its giver with the writer of the unfinished letter.



"SUDDENLY THERE WAS FRAMED IN A SMALL, IVY-DRAPED WINDOW A FACE AS LOVELY AS ANY FOR WHICH A KNIGHT OF OLD EVER DID BATTLE."

What to think of the odd thing that had just happened Christopher did not know.

In the circumstances, he felt constrained for the sake of "V. L. H." (and of his bet) to carry out his original intentions. But he made his round of the roads, returning to the village by a different way, as he had planned, and no one came forward to claim his services, to say, "It was I who wrote to you. I am glad that you are here." Nevertheless, Christopher had no thought of leaving the neighbourhood. There were two mysteries, instead of one, to be unravelled now.

He had kept on his room at the inn, and when he had put away Scarlet Runner he shut himself up for another look at the cigarette-case. Opening it, the broken pieces of glass fell out, and he saw what he had not guessed at before. The mirror concealed a false back to the case, and hidden there he found a photograph of a young man. He was an exceedingly good-looking young man, with a strong, clever face softened by the dreamy arch of the eyebrows, over fine dark eyes. And between the photograph and the strip of gold which held it in place was a slip of paper on which he saw written, close together and all in capitals, the letters "TVB-XCHTAY."

"A key to a cipher, perhaps," Christopher said to himself. Was he intended to pluck out its secret, and profit by what it taught him? He could not tell. And after staring at the nine letters for ten or fifteen minutes on end, hazarding all kinds of conjectures, and trying to fit them together, he was no wiser than before.

It could not be, he thought, that the girl had wished him to keep the cigarette-case. For some reason, it had been necessary for her to get rid of the thing at the moment, to hide it from someone, perhaps; and seeing him pass, she had believed him gentleman

enough to help her. Of course, she would count upon his taking the first opportunity to return her property; and the only possible place where she could expect him to look for her was at Kennerwick Castle. He decided, as the "someone" who must not see the cigarette-case might have seen a fleeing motor-car, that it would be well for the motorist to appear next time in the character of an ordinary tourist. He therefore exchanged his chauffeur's cap for one of tweed, which matched his clothes, and went out on foot.

After half an hour's fast walking he had reached the castle, and was knocking at the door of a cottage built against one of the half-fallen walls. This was the dwelling of the caretaker, whose business in life it was to guard the ruins from vandals and to show visitors about.

He was obliged to lift the knocker two or three times before anyone answered, though there was a faint stirring inside the house, and he fancied that he heard suppressed voices. Presently the door was opened by an old woman. She was small and bent, though strong-looking, with hard features and singularly bright eyes that glittered piercingly out of a yellow network of wrinkles.

Christopher said civilly that he had come to visit the castle, and hoped that he had not chosen an hour when it was not to be seen by the public. The woman, who seemed somewhat agitated—though such requests must have punctuated the hours of her daily life for years—replied that the guardian, her husband, had had an accident and was in hospital, but that she would take the gentleman round. She then unhooked an enormous key from a nail on the wall, and led the way out of doors.

To enter the ruins, one passed under a portcullis, and so on up a gentle slope between thick, broken walls. At the end of this passage an ugly modern door had replaced the old one long ago destroyed; and, following his guide, Christopher found himself in the castle. The old woman apologized for not knowing as much of the history of the place as her husband did, and had the young man really come as a seeker of knowledge his visit would have proved somewhat of a disappointment. They went from room to room, many of which were open to the sky, with mere stony suggestions of what the upper storeys had been; but, as Christopher had been led by his late adventure to expect, the keep was in a better state of preservation than the rest. He asked no questions; but going up a steep stone stairway which would lead, he knew, to a certain window, his heart began to beat rather more quickly than usual. He hoped, and more than half believed, that he would find a beautiful girl waiting for him at the top of the steps; but he found—stone walls, and emptiness; a silent place where nothing moved save the wandering sprays of ivy which peered and beckoned at the window where She had been.

Deeply disappointed, Christopher walked about pretending to be interested in the thickness of the walls. The old woman stood still, watching him as he went to the window and looked out.

In silence he gazed from the window which had framed the beautiful, anxious face, and made no comment when, wound round a tangled branch of ivy, he found a bright, curling hair that glittered like a delicate thread of gold. In the room there was no other trace of the girl for whom he searched, but he was sure that this was one. She had caught her hair in the ivy as she leaned out

"CHRISTOPHER WALKED ABOUT PRETENDING TO BE INTERESTED IN THE THICKNESS OF THE WALLS."

to throw the cigarette-case. Then she had hurriedly withdrawn her head. But why had she been in such haste? What had happened, or what had been about to happen?

Christopher asked no questions, but still meekly allowed himself to be shown the usual things and told the usual legends. Then he gave the old woman the usual fee, with the usual extra tip, and took his leave. But turning to glance back at the guardian's cottage when the door was shut, he saw his late guide at the window, peering out. Behind her stood a man, looking over her stooping shoulder; and though, as Christopher's eyes met his, he moved away and was gone in an instant, Race caught a clear enough impression to feel that he would recognise the face again. It was that of a man passing beyond middle age. The eyes and skin were singularly dark in contrast to thick white hair, and there was something peculiar—Christopher had not time to see clearly what—about the prominent nose.

"Can it be the guardian, back from the hospital, yet too lazy or feeble to take people over the castle?" Christopher asked himself. But though the face was that of a man well past fifty, it was still young in contrast with the wrinkled visage of the woman. Besides, though seen for no more than a second, it struck Christopher that the features were those of a cultured, intelligent person. Possibly a tourist had arrived while the woman was absent, and taken shelter in her cottage from the drizzling mist. But why should a new arrival be so interested in a departing one as to peer eagerly over the caretaker's shoulder? Christopher was half minded to go back and confront the man who had flattered him by such an attention; but he could think of no plausible excuse for returning.

Dissatisfied with the result of his quest, he resolved to visit the castle again after dark, hoping that the girl might return under cover of dusk to demand her property and explain her strange manner of disposing of it. Meanwhile, however, he had half the day to get through, and—save for such interludes as meals—nothing to do with it except make inquiries concerning the girl.

Describing her, he questioned the landlord at the inn, and afterwards the young woman at the post-office; but neither the one nor the other could tell him anything; and when after nightfall he groped his way through a thick mist towards the castle ruins, he had no clue which might help him to find the lady of the cigarette-case. The chance that darkness would afford her to recover her treasure, on the spot where she had parted with it, was so obvious that Christopher believed she would take it.

The hour was still early, but already—as the French say—"it made night" when he saw the broken towers of Kennerwick Castle thrown like great splashes of ink against a murky sky. The mist was rain, and the rain was mist; and there was no gleam of light anywhere except a weak, yellow blur which meant a window of the guardian's cottage.

What if the girl were waiting for him somewhere near—waiting and trusting to his intelligence for the keeping of an unmade tryst? It would be easy to miss her on a night like this.

Perhaps she wanted a glimpse of his face before speaking. Well, she should have it. Christopher held the lighted wax match to the cigarette until its flame began to burn down. Then, as it flared up before the end, there came to his ears stealthy rustlings, followed by a hiss wicked as a snake's, and at the same instant he was conscious of a stinging pain in his left arm.

Away went match and cigarette, their sparks drowned in the wet grass; and Christopher, surprised and pricked to anger, realized that he had been shot with an air-gun. Suspecting no lurking malice, he had made himself a target for someone to pot at; and with a hot desire for vengeance he started to run in the direction of the rustlings. Now and then he thought that he heard the stealthy sounds again: a crackling fern, a tiny breaking stick, on this side or that, as he came on a slight descent towards the castle moat. Then a shadow loomed ahead, and Christopher sprang at it, only to seize the bristling branches of a young larch or yew tree. At the same time he received a blow on the shoulder from behind—a sharp, unexpected blow which sent him pitching forward. Before he could recover his balance, the ground seemed to vanish from under his feet, and he plunged with a great splash into the stagnant water of the moat.

For a few seconds he floundered clumsily, then got to his feet, for the water, though ice-cold, was not deep. Slimy weeds festooned his head and hung, clinging and oozy, over his eyes. He shook them off, forgetting the hot pain in his arm and his indignation at the unknown who had caused it, in fear for the cigarette-case. Had it fallen from his pocket, to lie hidden in the mud at the bottom of the moat?

No, it was safe, and Christopher could turn

his attention to getting out of the scrape into which the enemy had plunged him. By groping he came upon a broken place in the moat-wall, where he could get foothold and handhold of a precarious kind. After a slip or two he succeeded in climbing out, and, despite the risk of being shot at again, devoted his attention to ridding himself of as many weeds and as much loose mud as possible. The person who had played him these two sorry tricks had probably exhausted his resources for the moment. In any case, no further attack was made, and after a walk which restored his circulation, if not his temper, Christopher regained the inn. Passing through the bar, as he was obliged to do to reach his room, he lightly explained to the landlord that he had slipped and fallen in the mud. But a red stain on his sleeve he concealed, only laughing when the landlord asked if he had hurt himself.

"HE PLUNGED WITH A GREAT SPLASH INTO THE STAGNANT WATER OF THE MOAT."

The wound in the arm was not serious, and Christopher, determined to keep his own counsel, attended to it unaided. Then, in his own room, he took out the cigarette-case and considered it with interest the while he rid himself of his soaked clothes. Certainly the little gold box was of great value to someone—a value far beyond its intrinsic worth. Was it for the concealed photograph, or the slip of paper with the queer cipher, that someone had lain in wait to shoot or drown him?

In his mind Christopher absolved the girl of blame, and he chuckled a little as he thought how the enemy had made all the deductions concerning his probable movements that he had expected her to make. The question was, how and when would that enemy try again? If he were determined, without being subtle, he would very likely make another attempt in the night.

The man—since only a man would have had strength for that push—must have been near the girl when she threw the cigarette-case. He must have seen someone jump from a motor and pick it up; also he must have identified the night-wanderer with the owner of the car.

During the long, wakeful hours of the night Christopher planned, when day came, to find out something about the man who had peered through the cottage window. But when, by his request, a London newspaper and breakfast were brought to his room, a paragraph in the Personal column of the *Daily Recorder* turned his attention in an instant from people and events at Stoke d'Estcourt.

"TVB" stared at him in large black capitals at the head of that famous column. 'Whoever can supply information as to these letters and those following will be richly rewarded if he communicates Box 1865, *Daily Recorder* Office," he read, with a keen stab of excitement.

"Quick work!" Christopher said to himself. For he did not doubt that he was the person for whose benefit the paragraph had been put in print. He was in a position to supply the wished-for information, but he

would not supply it until he could be sure that the advertiser was the rightful owner of the cigarette-case, with such secrets as it contained.

Of course, the girl might have been forced to leave Stoke d'Estcourt, after throwing him the cigarette-case, and if she had gone to London she would have had time to get this advertisement in that day's paper. On the other hand, somebody else, remaining near the village in the hope of waylaying the possessor of the treasure, could have sent the paragraph to town by messenger. He might even have left the place himself late in the evening, after failing in the object for which he had stayed, and still have contrived to insert the paragraph.

Christopher was at a loss to decide between these deductions, but he made up his mind that he would have a better chance of getting into the thick of the mystery if he went to London himself. Having dressed hastily, therefore, and confined his researches for the white-haired man to a few inquiries which brought him no satisfaction, he paid his bill at the inn and departed with Scarlet Runner.

On the way to town he concocted a telegram, which he would not have thought it wise to send from the Stoke d'Estcourt post-office, and got it off from a small town where he stopped to lunch. The wording of the wire cost him a good deal of thought, ignorant as he was whether it would reach the hand of friend or foe. But on the whole he flattered himself that he had steered cleverly between Scylla and Charybdis. "Should the advertiser wish to hear what follows 'TVB,' the only way of doing so will be to call nine o'clock to-night (Friday) on Christopher Race, who may be able to give information, but will accept no reward."

This was all, save for the address of his lodgings, number and street.

He arrived at home late in the afternoon, and found no letters of interest. The soaked clothing, packed all day in his bag, he gave to his landlady as a present for her son; and so pleased was she that she favoured her lodger with a good dinner. Thus it was in a moderately serene mood that Christopher waited in his sitting-room for the caller invited at nine. Would it be a beautiful girl, and, if so, would she turn out to be "V. L. H.," or would the writer of the unfinished letter lurk for ever behind a curtain of mystery? Would it be the man who had shot in the dark, or an agent of that man; and what might be the scene which would be enacted?

But neither man nor woman came. Nine o'clock passed; ten o'clock; eleven; and at last Christopher went to bed.

The first thing he did in the morning was to open the *Daily Recorder* and cast his eyes down the Personal column. "TVB" was conspicuous only in absence, but towards the end of the column appeared something else which caught Christopher's attention at a glance: "V. L. H. is earnestly implored to communicate immediately with one who hoped to meet on Thursday at address V. L. H. knows. Great anxiety. Can't bear suspense."

So, Christopher Race was not the only person who had been given reason to count upon meeting "V. L. H." on Thursday!

Christopher wished ardently that he, as well as "V. L. H.," knew the address of the advertiser; but as he did not, and could think of no means of finding it out, he could do nothing to match the pieces of the puzzle together. It was certain that he would be given no information if he applied at the office of the *Daily Recorder*, and his only hope was that the delayed visit to his lodgings might be made during the day. He stopped in the house, therefore, writing letters, and trying to interest himself in a novel not as exciting as his own experiences; nor was there much inducement to go out, as a fog, characteristic of the month, hung brown and loathly over London. The air was heavily oppressive, and Christopher grew restless. He began to think that the advertiser had changed his or her mind, and that it was not worth while to hang about the house, waiting. When the four o'clock post brought him the offer of an immediate engagement for Scarlet Runner, therefore, he was inclined to accept. A Mr. Warren Lockwood wrote from The Laurels, Pleasant Avenue, Barnet, saying that friends had recommended Mr. Race and his car. He, Mr. Lockwood, had been suffering from bronchitis, and his doctor advised him not only to escape London fogs, but to escape in a motor. Having business connected with mines in Wales, it had occurred to Mr. Lockwood that pleasure and health might be combined with this. He wished to start in a day or two, but would like to have a glance at Mr. Race's car before deciding to take a tour in it. The only time for this glance would be on Saturday evening. Would Mr. Race be so kind as to drive his Scarlet Runner to The Laurels, arriving at eight o'clock, and wiring beforehand to say if he would come? If Mr. Race could dine, Mr. Lockwood would be delighted, as they

might then discuss mutual friends. And for a week's trip Mr. Lockwood was prepared to offer the round sum of a hundred guineas.

A hundred guineas was a decent sum to earn in a week, even in these days of Scarlet Runner's success; and as the year of Christopher's probation with his uncle was now drawing towards an end, he wished to swell the total of his twelve months' earnings to a goodly sum. Of course, he was keen on stopping in town until the mystery of the cigarette-case (if not that of "V. L. H.") should be cleared up; but if Mr. Lockwood were not in too great a hurry to be off, there might be a chance of finding out something before the start. Taking everything together, Christopher determined to call at The Laurels, and sent a wire to that effect, pleading an engagement for dinner.

This engagement being with himself, he had something to eat at home, very early, hoping up to the last moment, in vain, for a visitor. Then, setting out from Scarlet Runner's garage at seven, the fog had so thickened that he doubted if he could find the way. On all sides, as he moved cautiously along near the pavement, were shouting drivers, snorting horses, and the muffled sound of horses' hoofs heard in murky darkness. Towards Regent's Park the fog lifted slightly, but in the Finchley Road it settled again as densely as ever, and he could go at little more than a walking pace.

Suddenly, at what seemed to be a corner of the wide country road not far outside Barnet, a voice cried to him.

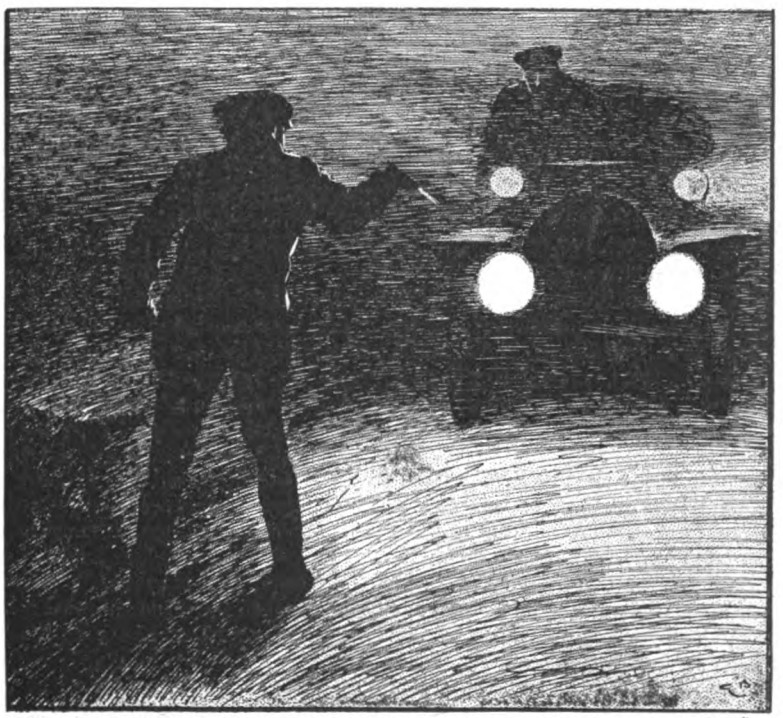
"Scarlet Runner?" it shouted; and Race, startled, answered before he had stopped to think: "Yes."

Next instant a black form was silhouetted strangely in the pale haze of the car lamps, and three short, sharp reports barked dryly in the night.

"Tyre burst!" was the first thought that flashed into Christopher's mind. Yet—when he had time for the question—how could three tyres burst almost simultaneously, and on a cold, damp evening?

A few seconds later the acrid smell of gunpowder, mingling with the sulphur-reek of the fog, gave him his answer. Someone had fired a revolver at his driving-wheel tyres, and two shots had taken effect, for he could feel the car settling down on the deflated inner tubes. Wild with fury at the outrage, Race leaped from his seat to the roadway, peering into the darkness, tingling to inflict punishment, and reckless of danger for himself. There was no sound of running footsteps. The scoundrel must be lurking—— But the thought was cut abruptly as the breaking of a thread. As he touched ground, something thick and soft was thrown over his head from behind and twisted round his neck.

Taken by surprise in the heat of rage, for an instant Christopher lost his breath. He stumbled under the onslaught, staggered, and nearly lost his balance. Hands deftly, swiftly tore open the buttons of his overcoat, and he knew instantly, with returning presence of mind, that he had two men to deal with. Pitting all his strength and intelligence against the pair, who had him at so great a



"A BLACK FORM WAS SILHOUETTED STRANGELY IN THE PALE HAZE OF THE CAR LAMPS."

disadvantage, he fought desperately and with the skill of a trained boxer. The cigarette-case was in an inside pocket of his waistcoat, and he resolved that he would only lose it with his life.

A fierce upward swing of his right arm was just in time to prevent the man at his back from twisting the hood too tightly round his throat. Stepping back heavily on the feet of this fellow, he shot out a left arm like a battering-ram and caught the would-be pick-pocket squarely in the face. There was a grunt of pain, and the prying hands fell away from Christopher's coat, but the man behind flung an arm round his neck, and the folds of cloth pressed stiflingly against his mouth.

There was no time to be lost, or he would have them both upon him again, and, twisting like an eel, Christopher slipped round and faced the enemy at his back. Tearing at the hood with one hand and striking out fiercely, if wildly, with the other, Christopher knew that he had got in a blow somewhere. In another second he was free of the muffling hood, but the man he had flung off did not wait to be attacked. He fled—swallowed up in the fog; and Race, wheeling rapidly to find the other, whom he hoped that he had downed, found only darkness. Soon, far away, he heard the humming of a motor, and wondered whether the pair of ruffians had gone off in a car.

To attempt pursuit in the fog would be useless. Besides, he had seen the face of neither man. Panting from the struggle, he assured himself with some sense of triumph that the cigarette-case was still safe in his waistcoat-pocket.

What an innocent he had been not to suspect the letter from Barnet as part of a plot! He saw how easily he had been duped, now that it was too late; nevertheless, he made up his mind grimly to go on and seek out the gentleman at The Laurels, if such a house existed. If "Mr. Lockwood" were at home there might be an interesting interview, and Christopher enjoyed it in anticipation as, by means of an ingenious tool he carried, he rolled the old tyres off and new ones on to the rims of Scarlet Runner.

By the time the car was ready to go on again he had made up his mind not to pay the call alone, but to take for a companion a member of the local police.

Most policemen within motoring radius of London had heard the name of Christopher Race, and he was received favourably at the police-station in Barnet. Without telling the story of the cigarette-case, he confided to the inspector in charge the fact that a piece of jewellery in his possession was apparently coveted by an unscrupulous stranger. He showed the letter with the address of The Laurels, which was written, not embossed, and gave an account of what had occurred to him on his way to keep the appointment. The house was looked up in the directory and found to exist, and, with a plain-clothes policeman beside him in the car, Christopher went on towards Pleasant Avenue.

The Laurels was surrounded by grounds of considerable size, and the gate admitting to a gravelled drive was thrown back. Christopher saw no lights as he turned in, but as Scarlet Runner purred an announcement of her arrival the front door was partially opened, throwing out a narrow stream of light, which sought to focus on the motor. Already, however, the policeman had slipped from his place and, as Christopher descended, sheltered behind him, moving on step for step with the leader, whose broad shoulders screened his stooping figure from sight. Then suddenly, and unexpectedly to the man who held the light inside the half-open door, Race pushed his way in, the policeman following close.

The person behind the door evidently had no wish to prevent Christopher from entering. He gave way readily, but at sight of the other man who suddenly appeared, like a Jack-in-a-box, he uttered an oath and dashed the lamp he held on the floor. Out went the light, as the glass crashed in a hundred pieces, but instantly the policeman's dark lantern flashed into the darkness.

"No use, Tommy; I've spotted that mug of yours," said the plain-clothes man, cheerfully. "We haven't come for you, but it'll be the worst night's work you've done yet if you don't act with instead of against us."

As he spoke the bright ray of his lantern shone full on the man who had opened the door—a big, hulking fellow, with the face and build of a prize-fighter. He had been in the act of trying to bolt, but, recognised and addressed by name, he thought better of it.

"I ain't done nothin' to be ashamed of," he explained, sulkily.

The policeman laughed. "I suppose you're engaged here as butler, eh?" Then, turning to Race: "This is an old acquaintance of mine, Tommy Birkett. We've knocked up against each other now and then, eh, Tommy? Birkett's name you may remember, Mr. Race, in sporting papers some years ago. Not a bad one with the

"THE BRIGHT RAY OF HIS LANTERN SHONE FULL ON THE MAN WHO HAD OPENED THE DOOR."

gloves, but a bit down on his luck of late. Had some little trouble; same sort of trouble he can avoid now by confiding in the police. Just tell us who engaged you to buttle for him, Tommy."

"By Jove, the place has no furniture in it!" exclaimed Christopher.

"The caretaker's a pal of mine," said the big, sulky man, stolidly.

"Not good enough, Tommy; try again," smiled his old acquaintance with the lantern. "Better call *me* your pal and tell the truth."

Then Tom Birkett did tell the truth, or something near it. He mumbled a tale of a "pal of his" who had come to him from a gentleman who wanted a strong chap to "pay out" a bad man the gentleman was too old and weak to punish himself. Birkett was to have ten pounds in advance for the job and another tenner when it was finished. He was introduced to the caretaker at The Laurels, a "doddering old Johnny with a nose like a lantern," made up a quick friendship with him, and invited himself to spend the evening and bring drink, for which refreshment the caretaker was now much the worse, in the kitchen. Instructions received through the "pal," with the advance, were for him to wait near the front door with a lamp from a quarter to eight till the arrival of a motor-car, on hearing which he was to open the door part-way, and not allow himself to be seen until the visitor was inside and the door locked behind him. Then he was to "lay out" the new-comer in first-rate style—nothing serious, but enough to "knock him silly" and keep him in that condition for several hours. Having accomplished this end, he had permission to leave the house, and the unconscious man in it. With anything that might happen afterwards he need not concern himself, except to claim the rest of the "stuff" at a certain public-house in the Mile End Road, next day.

On the strength of his willingness to take his "old friend," the plain-clothes policeman, to the rendezvous at the time named, Tommy was allowed to go; though, as soon as his back was turned, his friend followed him at a respectful distance, having meanwhile ascertained that Birkett's diagnosis of the caretaker's condition was not exaggerated.

It was pretty clear that the pugilist's employer, or the "pal" who had been the go-between, intended to arrive sooner or later at "The Laurels," to take the cigarette-case from the body of its helpless possessor. Christopher arranged to wait, therefore, and the policeman promised to return as soon as he had been able to "put someone else on to Birkett." In half an hour he was back again, therefore, having detailed a comrade for the shadowing business.

Scarlet Runner was left standing before the house door to give the impression that her master lay unconscious within; but hours passed, and Birkett's mysterious employer neither came nor sent. A merciless douche of cold water restored the caretaker to partial possession of his senses, but he could throw no light upon the matter, knowing nothing,

indeed, of what had happened, except that he had had a new chum in to spend the evening. He said that The Laurels belonged to a maiden lady who had sold her furniture and gone to live abroad. The house had been in the hands of several agents for nearly a year, and during that time he had been in charge. He knew nothing of a gentleman named Lockwood, and since September nobody had come to look over the house.

Christopher's idea was that the organizer of the plot, with an assistant, had waited for and waylaid him on the road. If they had succeeded in getting what they wanted they would have left him lying stunned with empty pockets, Birkett's services not being needed after all. Most likely, he and the policeman agreed, one, if not both, had come back, meaning to watch The Laurels until after the departure of Birkett, but seeing him followed from the house had guessed that the game had gone wrong, and hastened to vanish.

"Whoever this man is, he must have a reputation to keep up," said the policeman, "for he thinks more of it than he does of getting what he wants from you, though he's evidently keen on that. You can count on The Laurels being watched by us, but my opinion is that the hunt won't come back that way. You'll find the wind blowing from some other quarter, an unexpected one, perhaps, and my word to you is—consult Scotland Yard."

With this advice still echoing in his ears, Christopher at last drove Scarlet Runner rapidly back to London, the fog having lifted with a hint of breeze. He was tired and hungry, and, knowing that he would get nothing to eat at his lodgings, when he had put up the car and changed his clothes he went to his club, where refreshment, liquid or solid, was to be had at any hour.

The Wayfarers', as most people know, is a loved resort of all sorts of men, from dukes down to mere geniuses. Soldiers and explorers, actors and artists, men of letters and men of law frequent the dingy yet ever cheerful rooms. To-night a musical entertainment was going on, and the club dining-room was almost deserted when Christopher walked in. Two men sat at a table in a corner, talking earnestly, and hearing him enter they looked up, as if not too pleased to have the room invaded. Both were young, and strangers to Christopher, yet the face of one seemed curiously familiar to him.

"Now, where *have* I seen that good-looking chap before, and lately too?" Race asked himself.

Then, suddenly, the answer sprang into his mind. This was the original of the photograph in the gold cigarette-case.

A wave of excitement swept over Christopher. In a low voice he asked the waiter who had taken his order if he knew who were the two gentlemen at the other table.

"Why, sir," replied the old fellow, who had been a "feature" of the club for years, "don't you know by sight the celebrated Mr. Fergus O'Brian? He's as famous as—as you are, only in a different way. He started his career in the law; but, though he's a gentleman by birth, he's——"

"Oh, I've heard of Fergus O'Brian, of course," said Christopher. "The private detective. Which of the two is he?"

"The one at the head of the table, sir. I don't know his guest. Not a member of the club, sir, unless a brand-new one."

Christopher was disappointed. His man—the younger of the two—was the other man. But he determined that neither he nor his neighbours should leave the room without his finding out what he wanted to know. He took the gold cigarette-case from his pocket and laid it on the table, where its diamonds flashed in the light of a red-shaded candle. Three minutes later its gleam caught the eye of the young man who was not Fergus O'Brian; and Christopher saw his face go through the changes from astonishment and incredulity to intense eagerness.

"What will he do now?" was the question in Christopher's mind. But it was almost instantly answered. What the young man did was to jump up and, on pretence of going to the fireplace to warm his hands, pass close to the table where Race sat. He paused, and Christopher's eyes and his met. His were true eyes as well as handsome, and any doubt that might have crept into Race's mind concerning the original of the photograph died in a second.

"You'll think it very strange," said the young man, "but I must beg you to tell me how you got that cigarette-case."

"I don't think it strange," returned Christopher. "When I recognised your face, I put the case there hoping you'd ask me that question. I'll answer it with pleasure; and there are some questions I trust you'll answer me."

Fergus O'Brian got up and came across the room. "You're Mr. Race, aren't you?" he asked.

Christopher assented, and added that he had just learned who the speaker was.

"This is my friend—indeed, my distant relative—Mr. Maurice Naylor," said O'Brian.

"M. N. !" exclaimed Christopher, impulsively.

"Exactly. We were speaking of that cigarette-case when you showed it. When you've finished your supper——"

"I have finished it," said Race, who had already done justice to a devilled bone.

"Then perhaps you'll accept an invitation to my chambers."

"I'd rather you'd both come to my rooms," replied Christopher. "You'll understand why, perhaps, when we've had a talk—about the cigarette-case. You won't have far to go."

And they did begin to understand, in a way that was a surprise to all three; for on arriving at Christopher's lodgings they came upon a scene of wild confusion in his sitting-room. Everything had been ransacked and left in disorder; and it was the same in the bedroom. Someone, under cover of the thick fog, had made an entrance, probably climbing across from the balcony of an adjoining house, which was unoccupied. So far as Christopher could tell, nothing had been taken; yet nothing had escaped the most minute examination. Not only had every drawer been searched, but books had been taken from their shelves, pictures had been turned face to the wall, and photographs had been pulled out of their frames.

"This is also on account of the cigarette-case," said Christopher. "There's a man who wants it badly. I don't know who he is yet, but——"

"I think I can tell you," cut in Maurice Naylor.

"Can you also tell me who is V. L. H.?"

"She is Violet Lester Hardcastle, the niece of the man who probably paid this room a visit while you were out. She—didn't give you the cigarette-case?"

"In a way she did—to keep it out of her uncle's hands, as it looks now. Can you tell me where she is?"

"I wish I could. I've been advertising in the *Daily Recorder* for news of her. My friend Mr. O'Brian knows the whole story. When we saw you, I was consulting him about the best way of reaching Miss Hardcastle, who is engaged to me against her uncle's will."

"Perhaps if I tell you how I got the cigarette-case it will help you both," said Christopher; and then, beginning with the unfinished letter, he gave them the whole history of the affair, ending with the episode in Barnet.

"Certainly it's Hardcastle who has planned all, if he hasn't done it all," exclaimed Naylor. "I'll bet it was he who grabbed you from behind to-night. He's as big a coward as he is a scoundrel, though O'Brian was saying that I'd have difficulty in proving him a villain."

"THEY CAME UPON A SCENE OF WILD CONFUSION IN HIS SITTING-ROOM."

"He has a good enough reputation as a solicitor," said O'Brian, "but I begin to think from things Naylor has been telling me that he's got into low water—been speculating with his clients' money, perhaps, or——"

"He's his niece's guardian," explained

Naylor. "Brother of her dead father, who thought everything of him. But Violet's mother was an American; and she never liked the man—never trusted him. The money was all hers, but the fellow got a lot of it in his hands somehow—against the mother's wish, I fancy—and, naturally, he doesn't want Violet to marry, as by her father's will he has charge of her affairs until she does. He kept her at school in Paris till she was twenty, to keep her out of the way of men; but I'm attached to the Embassy there, and we met. I fell in love with her at sight—who wouldn't?—and when Hardcastle heard what had happened he came and carried her off at once. He was clever enough, though, to stop me from making a row by saying he'd inquire about my circumstances and so on, and if all was well would allow the engagement to go on. Meanwhile Violet was to stop with him in some country house he was taking. Hardcastle promised to write, and also that, if everything went as he expected, Violet should write too. He'd let me know the new address and all that. Well, I heard nothing. I found out his office address and wrote several times. No answer. Just then I couldn't get leave, which was a horrid bother; but after a fortnight of worry and suspense I received a letter from Violet, evidently written in great haste. Here it is. You shall see it, Mr. Race."

From an inner pocket Naylor produced a half-sheet of paper, at sight of which Christopher had to restrain an exclamation, for it exactly matched one which he himself possessed, and the writing which covered it was the same as that in the letter over which he had so often puzzled.

"DEAREST MAURICE," he read. "This is in the greatest haste. I've run away from my uncle's house—escaped, I might call it, for since a dreadful scene we had I've been practically a prisoner. I've written to you, but, as I never could get out to post the letters, I'm afraid you've never had them. I've been trying for days to get away, but have only just succeeded. Now I've got to a farm-house not far from the village, giving a false name, and making up a stupid story about myself, but it answers very well, for they're keeping me as a lodger for a night or two. Really, I'm in hiding here, for I daren't leave the house lest my uncle, or that hateful, wicked old valet of his you saw in Paris, should pounce down on me like a hawk and carry me back again. I tell you, dearest, I'm *afraid* of them both. I don't know what they may not do, and all because of my money. I'm sure uncle must have done something dishonest. Anyway, he came to me one night and said that he knew my mother had left me a great deal which had never come into his hands; that he'd got information about there being valuable bonds in a bank in New York of which he ought to have known. I admitted that it was true, and that dear mother had given me a letter about the bonds just before she died, saying they were never to be put in his charge. He said he must have them, that he was in difficulties, but this extra money would tide him over, and he would make it all right afterwards. He begged so that I began to tell him the letters of the combination lock on my private safe at the bank, and had got as far as TVB, when it seemed exactly as if mother's voice spoke in my ear and forbade me to go on. There was a miserable scene between us after that. His eyes were awful, and frightened me. You know my little cigarette-case which you gave me with your initials in it, and your photograph hidden inside? I told you I would keep there the thing most valuable to me after your picture. That thing is the combination by which the safe at the bank which contains the bonds can be opened. No one has opened it and cut off the bonds since mother was in New York last—not long before she died. Not a soul living except myself knows the combination—not even the manager of the bank. I'm sure mother was right in not trusting uncle, and that this secret fortune is all I have left. I daren't wait for you to come here, but shall try to get to London by motor, rather than show myself at a railway station, and will go straight to the Savoy Hotel. You will get this just in time to meet me there if you start from Paris Thursday morning. I shall finish this letter and write another, arranging about the motor. And to do both I've but one sheet of paper. —Your loving "VIOLET."

Christopher stood silently thinking for a minute, with the half-sheet of paper in his hand. He guessed now that the girl had been interrupted in the midst of her letter to him, by warning of her uncle's arrival. The man had traced her to the farm-house she spoke of, no doubt, and Violet, before escaping the second time, must have given the unfinished letter to someone in the house, begging that an envelope might be addressed and posted. Maurice Naylor's letter had probably been posted by the same hand.

Race remembered now hearing the name of Hardcastle mentioned by the village postmistress, and how she had said that Miss Hardcastle was an invalid, who had not been seen about since her arrival. He fancied that Mr. Hardcastle must in reality have taken the house near Stoke d'Estcourt some time before, though to excuse himself from giving an address he had told Naylor that he was looking for a country place.

As to the girl's appearance at the window of the castle keep, Christopher could only account for it by supposing that she had fled to the castle from a farm-house near by, hoping not only to hide from pursuit, but telling herself also that he might possibly pass that way with Scarlet Runner if he received her unfinished letter. Perhaps the guardian's wife, in the absence of her sick husband, had been bribed to keep the girl in the cottage overnight and then had been treacherous enough to let out the secret, or else Hardcastle had discovered his niece's whereabouts in some other way. In any case, Christopher believed now that the man must have been upon the stairs, or even in the room of the window, when Violet had seen Scarlet Runner and thrown the cigarette-case. As she knew of Christopher Race's existence, she had probably seen his photograph in some newspaper, and it must have been a relief to her to feel that he had come to the rescue, even though too late for her to carry out her plan.

The question was, what had become of the girl after the car drove away?

Christopher recalled the hard-featured old woman. She looked capable of doing almost anything for money. If a man like Hardcastle asked for her help and offered to pay for it, she would have given it. Certain it was that the woman had lied to him — Christopher—and perhaps the two had shut the girl up in a back room of the cottage, keeping her there until it seemed safe to smuggle her away to Hardcastle's house, not far off.

All these thoughts passed through Race's mind in the fraction of a minute, and Naylor had hardly time to grow impatient at his silence over the letter, before he brought out the other half-sheet and matched the two together. He and O'Brian compared deductions, and arrived at the same conclusion.

"I think," remarked O'Brian, gravely, "that we'd all better go down at once into Warwickshire, and pay a surprise visit to Mr. Hardcastle's house; the sooner the better."

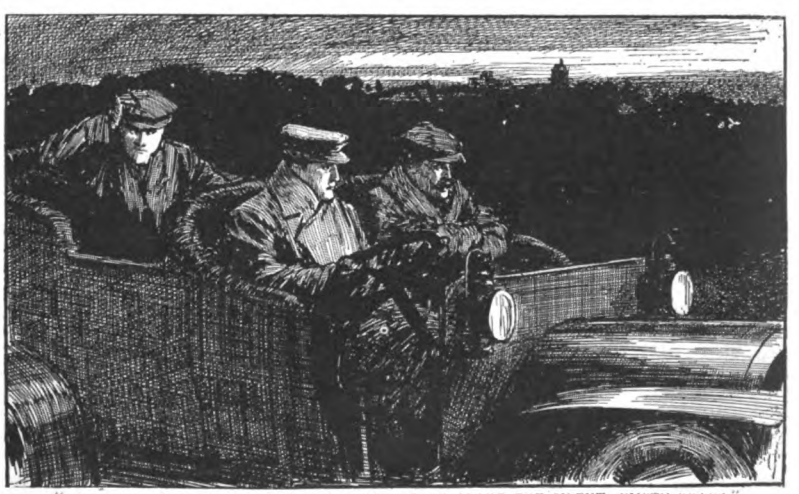
"We can go in my car," said Christopher. "And we can start whenever you like—in half an hour, if it suits you."

"You think she's in danger!" cried Naylor.

"Well, I think, anyhow, that the combination's in danger," replied O'Brian, "if Miss Hardcastle's committed it to memory, which no doubt she has, only keeping the paper in case of fatal forgetfulness. If that man can induce or force her to tell him, now he's failed to obtain the memorandum in the cigarette-case, he'll do it."

"He's got a good start already," exclaimed Christopher. "He and the other man—the 'wicked valet' Miss Hardcastle speaks of, perhaps—very likely had a car themselves. I heard the sound of a motor in the fog when they'd run off and left me broken down. After failing in all three of his attempts to-night, Hardcastle can have gone flying back to Stoke d'Estcourt if he likes, and, if so, can be well ahead of us in reaching there, no matter how soon we go or how fast."

"For Heaven's sake, then, let's get off without a minute's delay," implored Naylor, "since you say you'll take us, Mr. Race. The thought that harm may be done to my beautiful girl is intolerable. I know Stoke



"SHE FLEW AS SHE HAD SELDOM FLOWN BEFORE ALONG THE SILENT, EMPTY ROADS."

d'Estcourt well. My cousin, Sir Edward Leigh, has a place near. If only I could have guessed where she was!"

"There's one thing that ought to be done," said O'Brian, "and that is to advise the police to get a warrant for Hardcastle's arrest. Afterwards we'll get the pugilist Birkett to produce the alleged 'pal,' who'll probably be able to identify his employer. Hardcastle may have disguised himself while making arrangements to carry out that little scheme, but he's got a broken nose, which he can't hide."

"The man who looked out of the cottage window!" muttered Race.

"Also," went on O'Brian, quietly, "we shall very likely find out that the spinster who's said to own The Laurels is a client of Hardcastle's. In that case he would have known about her house standing empty, and perhaps about the convivial habits of her caretaker. The man may give us trouble yet, his niece being still a few weeks under age. Besides, if he's wormed the secret out of her, the first thing he'll do will be to slip off to New York and open that safe at her mother's bank. I suppose you don't know what bank it is, Naylor?"

"No, I don't; and hang the bonds! I want to get to Violet," answered the young man. "I've money enough for us both."

"Still, I've a fancy for saving those bonds," smiled O'Brian.

It was five o'clock on Sunday morning, and still pitch dark, when they started off in Scarlet Runner, but the good car seemed to know that there was stiff work to be done. She flew as she had seldom flown before along the silent, empty roads, and at eight three haggard, mud-spattered men arrived at Stoke d'Estcourt after a non-stop run.

They learned of the first person they passed in the village where to find Mr. Hardcastle's place, and were there within the next ten minutes, flashing through the gates up to a severe, Georgian house.

Mr. Hardcastle, announced a sour-faced, middle-aged woman who opened the door, was not at home.

"Are you his valet's wife?" asked O'Brian, sharply.

"What business is that of yours?" was the equally sharp answer. But a look in the woman's eyes told the detective that he had hit upon the truth. Violet Hardcastle had had grim jailers.

"We will see Miss Hardcastle, if her uncle is not here," he said, authoritatively. And to his surprise and the astonishment of his companions, the servant made no objection. Ushering all three into a handsome, sparsely-furnished drawing-room, she said that Miss Hardcastle was not well, but she should have the gentleman's message, and would either come down or send word.

"Tell her it's Mr. Naylor," cried the girl's lover; "Mr. Maurice Naylor, who's found her, though she gave him no address, and couldn't make out the postmark on her letter."

"Will she come?" was the question in the minds of the three men. And in two minutes it was answered by the girl herself, pale and lovely in a tea-gown of white, her hair disordered as if she had hastily risen from bed.

"Oh, Maurice!" she sobbed, running to him, with eyes for no one else.

It was true that Mr. Hardcastle was "not at home," as his servant had said. But he had returned early that morning, by motor, as O'Brian had guessed; and by threatening to kill Maurice Naylor, whom he knew to be in London, he had induced Violet to tell her carefully-guarded secret, to save her lover's life. Then, with his confidential man, her uncle had gone off again in his car.

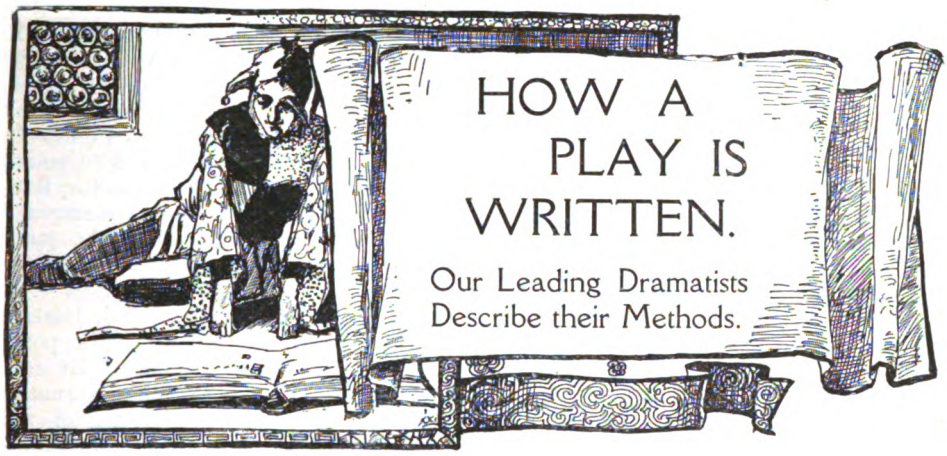
"But luckily," remarked the detective, when he had heard these details from the girl, "he can't sail for New York to-day."

"I wonder?" she said. "I happen to know that he's lately bought or hired a big steam yacht, but I don't know her name."

"*We'll* know it, before we're many hours older," O'Brian assured her. "We'll know whether she's sailed; if so, from what port and *for* what port. We'll know all there is to know, in fact; and when Mr. Hardcastle steps on shore across the water he'll find himself under arrest."

Which was exactly what happened. Therefore Mrs. Maurice Naylor is a rich woman, as well as a very grateful and happy one, in spite of the enormous peculations of that now celebrated defaulter, the solicitor Hardcastle.

Thus, after all, Christopher thought that he might fairly say he had won his bet with himself; so he bought the repeater. And the Naylors presented him with the gold cigarette-case as well.



HOW A PLAY IS WRITTEN.

Our Leading Dramatists Describe their Methods.

TO many playgoers the making of a play may seem a very simple matter. In actual writing it represents merely the length of half-a-dozen magazine articles, and, as to the rest, the good play, of course, has the art which conceals art. But what is this art? It cannot be seen, and yet it must be there, if the written words of the playwright, as spoken by the actor, are to have dramatic force. By what method does the playwright achieve this end? With a view to a clear answer to so interesting a question we have consulted some of the most successful contemporary writers for the stage.

MR. HENRY ARTHUR JONES.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

Mr. Henry Arthur Jones says, as the result of his long experience in playwriting, he now has a definite routine. "If a man did nothing but play whist for thirty years he should know all the cards.

"The idea, the plot, always comes first. The plot in a sense is nine-tenths of a play. And yet it should be as simple as possible. I believe I could put the plot of any of my plays—with the exception, perhaps, of 'The Silver King'—on a bit of paper the size of a shilling. Let me try with one—'The Middleman,' shall we say?"

THE PLOT OF 'THE MIDDLEMAN," WRITTEN BY MR. H. A. JONES ON A PIECE OF PAPER THE SIZE OF A SHILLING.

And, placing a shilling on a sheet of paper, the dramatist drew a circle round it, in which he wrote: "An old inventor who has made the fortune of a rich manufacturer finds that his favourite daughter has been ruined by the manufacturer's son. He makes a new invention, and ruins the manufacturer."

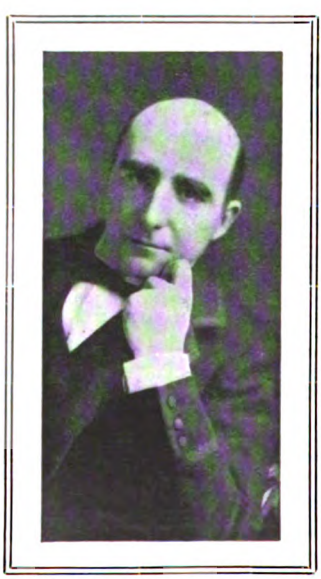
"When I have got my plot I write out my scenario in a book and draw up my list of characters. I find that I cannot work at my characters satisfactorily until I have given them names, and the choice of a name which seems to fit the character is sometimes a matter of difficulty. When I have the scheme of a play complete, then I take it away with me into the country—some quiet place in England or France. I cannot write in London, there are too many distractions, and, paradoxical as it may seem, I find that the quietest places to work in are hotels. When I want to work at an hotel I can always get the servants to see that I am not disturbed.

"When I am writing a play I usually rise at 6.30 a.m., have breakfast of coffee and eggs, and

then work till ten o'clock or so—that is, I sit down for work during that time. Sometimes I do only a little revision, sometimes nothing at all. Then I take a walk or drive, have luncheon, and spend the afternoon in dreaming over my next day's piece of work.

"The first act of a play I always find the most difficult. Life is continuous, but a play has to be divided into three or four sections. In the general scheme one has a lot of material—an incident, a saying, a piece of 'business'—to be used somewhere or other. In writing the first act one has to arrange where it is all to be introduced. Almost every line in the first act may thus have reference to something which is to occur in the second, third, or possibly fourth act. Of course, before the play is finished I may make some change in the scheme, some little variation in the scenario. It is like building a house; the architect's plans and elevations are carried out, but here one may alter the shape of a window, or there the position of a door. Only once or twice have I had to take the entire building down because the plans were not sound."

In reply to questions as to how his "local colour" was obtained, Mr. Henry Arthur Jones replied: "For 'The Middleman' I visited the Potteries and read up the subject. Before writing 'The Tempter' I read Froissart's 'Chronicles.' But with these two exceptions all my plays treat of life and character with which I am thoroughly familiar. As regards characterization, I can only treat of that which I know from first-hand knowledge. When I was in America it was suggested to me that I should write an American play, but I feel that I could not draw an American character. I think I know all classes of the English people—lower, middle, and upper—and all my characters have belonged to one or the other of these English classes. Stay, there was one exception — the French model in 'The Triumph of the Philistines,' and, although the character was praised highly by a leading French critic, I felt myself that it was only made convincing by the power of the actress, Miss Julia Nesville.



MR. A. W. PINERO.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

"No, I never make notes of either characters or incidents. I listen carefully to all that I hear and observe carefully all that I see, and then trust to my mental impressions."

Mr. A. W. Pinero, owing to an illness from which he was recuperating on the Continent, unfortunately could not be seen. But he has happily made a statement concerning his methods of work which serves the purpose almost as well as an interview could have done.

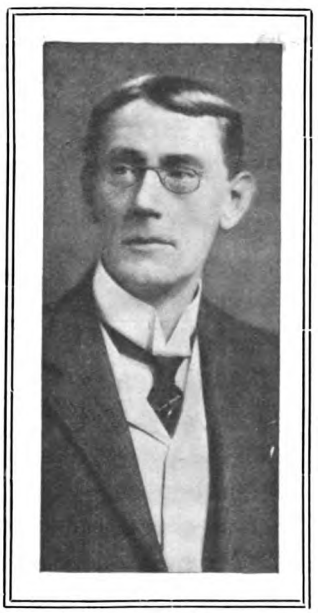
Mr. Pinero, we are informed, jots down in a note-book subjects for plays, possible titles, and method of treatment. He usually starts with a theme and then invents the story and characters by means of which it is to be illustrated on the stage. The characters are never preconceived, they arise naturally out of the story, and, in the opinion of the author of "His House in Order," "the development of character is the highest achievement of the dramatist."

Every line in a play is carefully thought out. Like many other authors, Mr. Pinero can think best whilst his body is in motion. The pen is put to paper in the intervals of pacing his study, and the idea of a scene has been worked cut whilst cycling in the park. He writes usually in the evening, and it is considered a good evening's work if a single speech has been got "letter-perfect," as actors would say.

Mr. Pinero must see his scenes. He went and had a good look at the Albany before placing there the chambers of Aubrey Tanqueray. For the later scenes he visited Haslemere, which he called "Willowmere," and Mrs. Cortelyon's house was one which he had actually seen there as the guest of Mrs. Humphry Ward. He always makes a sketch for the scene-painter and a ground plan for the stage-carpenter, and the details are rigidly adhered to, even as to the position of every piece of furniture.

As may be supposed from these particulars, the making of a play by Mr. Pinero is a question of months rather than of weeks. "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith"

took fifteen months; and "The Gay Lord Quex" was exceptional among his most successful plays of recent years in occupying only six months. "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" represented nine months' work, and a somewhat longer period, we believe, was devoted to "His House in Order." And to ensure working at his best Mr. Pinero has to seek the retirement of the country, secure from the calls of society. Scarcely one of his recent plays, we believe, has been written entirely in London.



MR. W. J. LOCKE.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

Mr. W. J. Locke, whose "The Morals of Marcus" was one of the most successful plays of 1906, explained his method in the course of an interview at the offices of an important professional institution of which he is the secretary.

The play just mentioned was an adaptation, of course, from Mr. Locke's novel, "The Morals of Marcus Ordeyne." Apropos of this circumstance, Mr. Locke contested the prevalent idea that it was "easier" to adapt a novel to the stage than to construct an entirely original play.

"According to my experience," said Mr. Locke, who produced his first play eight years ago, at the age of thirty-six, "it is more difficult. To turn a novel into a play is like taking the principal figure out of a picture and putting it into sculpture—and every artist knows how essentially different is art in the flat and the round. Art on the stage is entirely objective. On the modern stage, at least, a man's motives and feelings must be explained by his actions; all that he speaks to the audience must be for the purpose of carrying the action forward.

"My first step in the making of a play," continued Mr. Locke, speaking generally of his method of work, "is to find my root-idea. This is usually concerned with a triangle of persons—it may be two women and one man, or two men and one woman. I have next to consider my thesis, the right or wrong of a certain course of action to be illustrated on the stage. Then I get to the subordinate characters, whose actions are, of course, dependent on those of the triangle. They may have little or nothing to do; on the other hand, they may become of great importance in the telling of the story. One can never tell at the outset what will become of these subordinate characters. Take the part of a confidential servant. He may merely have to announce that the carriage waits or he may become one of the pivots of the plot, as in 'The Morals of Marcus,' and then a good deal of attention has to be given to the development of the characters.

"Having got together the *dramatis personæ* my next step is to divide the story into the series of three or four water-tight compartments—in other words, acts—demanded by the exigencies of the theatre, each compartment being complete in itself, and yet having its proper relationship to the other two or three. At this point I may find that my root-idea is impracticable for the stage; the story cannot well be brought into submission to those severe limitations of time and space which the stage imposes. In this case all my work has been thrown away and I have to start afresh.

"In grappling with these limitations of time and space, I have sometimes wished I could have had the use of a miniature stage whereon I could have arranged exits and entrances, and placed the furniture. But, in point of fact, I have had no assistance beyond pen and paper.

"As regards scenery, I rely for my local colour upon recollection. That is much better, I think, than visiting places specially in order to use them in a play; one's impressions are so much more spontaneous. They will not have photographic accuracy, perhaps, but it is always possible to verify little matters of fact by reference to guide-books. I have gone about the world a good deal, and I am never at a loss for a scene—in fact, the right spot always occurs to me in the most charming way just at the right time."

Mr. Sydney Grundy has been resting on his laurels for some time past, and was at first disinclined to speak about his work.

But his interest in the subject was soon kindled, and it is evident that in his heart he has not written "Finis" to his brilliant career of dramatic authorship. At any rate, in answering questions, the past tense which he at first adopted was soon unconsciously abandoned.

"How do I write a play? Well, I first think of the story, because to me a good story has always been of the first importance. I don't undervalue characterization, but, if one has a good story to tell, the characters will arise naturally out of it. In a play, it seems to me, the story ought to be one's main concern; in drama the chief interest must necessarily be dramatic, not psychological nor philosophical, although it may contain both psychology and philosophy.

"Having thought of a story I carry it about with me for some time, continually turning it over in my mind. If it continues to interest me, I set to work thinking out the characters by which the story can be most effectively told, then of the scenario, and the division into acts. I allow the whole thing to fructify in my mind, and do not put pen to paper for the actual writing of the play until I feel absolutely compelled to. Sometimes I have begun without having settled some knotty point in construction. Pondering over it in an arm-chair the problem has seemed unsolvable, but, having got to work, when the time came it has solved itself.

"Once the writing is started, however, I have to go on until the play is finished. I cannot understand how some playwrights can write an allotted portion every day, fulfilling all kinds of social engagements in the meantime. Once started I have to go on, stopping only for necessary food and sleep, and I have sometimes worked far into the night until 'fagged out.' A play has thus been finished in a few days; upon none of my plays, probably, have I spent more than a month, unless there has occurred some unavoidable interruption. Of course, I am speaking of the actual writing; the work of preparation, as I have indicated, may occupy months.

MR. SYDNEY GRUNDY.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

"At one time I was most conscientious over the MS of a play. I would show not only every exit and entrance and the position of the furniture, etc., but I would describe in detail every bit of 'business.' But after a time I found it desirable to leave something to the actor.

"Of course, if one is writing a play for a particular actor or actress, one's method would be different, but this is a thing I have never cared to do. Nor have I liked writing a play to order; the work then always seemed so forced and laborious. I remember once having accepted a commission—for a big spectacular play, I think it was. Do you know, I could not get to work on the thing; the slightest trifle would distract my attention, and I would watch a fly on the window for an hour at a time. One morning I was feeling perfectly wretched about my futile waste of time, and at last came to the conclusion that work for that day, at least, was impossible. I would read for a time. I took down a volume of Labiche's plays. I thought I had read them all years before, but I found one which, from the uncut edges, I had evidently overlooked. Just as I had finished reading it my wife came into the room, and I exclaimed to her, 'My dear, before I do anything else I must make an English version of this play. I have a good mind to sit down and begin at once.' 'Well, why not?' she replied. 'By Jove, I will.' I returned to my desk at once, thought no more of the spectacular drama, and in nine days had 'A Pair of Spectacles' ready for the stage. And in my opinion it was the best thing I have ever done."

"The ideal way," said Mr. Louis N. Parker, "no doubt, is to think out a central character and then let it develop as it will. Plot, *dramatis personæ*, scenery will follow naturally—the inevitable outcome of the one great character. But I do not pretend that I have always been able to follow this ideal method.

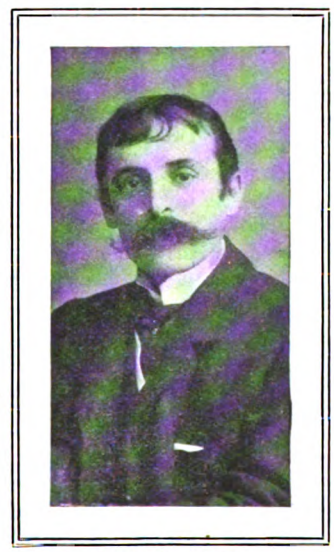
"The mechanical method to which one has been obliged sometimes to have recourse

is to get hold of an idea and base one's plot upon it—a motor-car accident, for example, and the possibilities of its sequel. The great objection to this method is that it is apt to cause one to make the characters fit the story.

"A third plan I have sometimes adopted is to take a group of characters — a suburban family, say — and endeavour to give a picture of their respective lives. But this method is likely to result in a play which will not attract the public, who do not care to see on the stage the incidents and circumstances of their own experience. When they go to the theatre, on the contrary, they want to be taken out of their own lives. In my own work I am an optimist, although I have great respect for the pessimists and their aims.

MR. L. N. PARKER.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

"I don't think there is anything more to be said that would be at all distinctive about my own methods as a playwright. I simply write them just as one might write novels, making use of no mechanical aids. It seems to me that the dramatist who wants the assistance of puppets on a model stage must lack that dramatic imagination which ought to be the first essential of his art, and for my own part, as regards the technical business of the stage, I think a good deal ought to be left to the skill of the actor."



MR. R. C. CARTON.
From a Photo. by the London Stereoscopic Co.

Mr. R. C. Carton, the author of "Liberty Hall," "Lord and Lady Algy," "Lady Huntworth's Experiment," and, more recently, of "Mr. Hopkinson," thus explained his methods.

"I should lay more stress upon difference of treatment than difference of method," said Mr. Carton, when asked wherein his method of writing a play differed from that of the dramatists already interviewed. "As I once said to Pinero, I believe we might be given exactly the same idea upon which to write a play and yet, in the result, there would not be the slightest resemblance between your play and mine—characters and incidents would be quite different. With a play, as with a lady's dress, so much depends upon the trimming and the garnishing—the embroidering would, perhaps, be the better word.

"I embroider a play a good deal between the time when the first idea occurs to me and the time when I actually write the dialogue. Take 'Mr. Hopkinson,' for example. At the outset I had merely the idea of a suburban 'bounder' coming in for an immense fortune and getting taken up by society people, among whom all kinds of little embarrassments would beset him. The idea seemed promising, and as I thought it out from day to day all kinds of by-paths opened themselves. Hopkinson's new friends would naturally want to marry him to someone—a society lady could only be willing to marry a man like Hopkinson for the sake of his money. She would have an admirer, but he would be reconciled to her marrying Hopkinson in the expectation that he would have the free run of their house after they were married. Then I thought of the lady's father; he would be away a great deal, travelling, and she would be left in charge of two other relatives. It occurred to me that the old man's amazement when he came home and was introduced to his future son-in-law would make a good situation; and, as it turned out, I believe it did. In this way the play was built up, bit by bit, from one simple idea. I was engaged on 'Mr. Hopkinson' for several months; the actual writing took me less than two.

"In writing the dialogue I always try to remember that each scene ought to carry forward the story and add something to the audience's knowledge of the characters. And at the end of an act I like to leave the audience something to think over, something which is quietly suggestive of future possibilities; in contrast to the old-fashioned 'curtain,' when a dramatic situation had to be worked up to, at which the hero and heroine struck attitudes in the midst of a group of the other characters. Perhaps I can best illustrate what I mean by reference to the second act of 'Lady Huntworth's Experiment.' As you may remember, Lady Huntworth's worthless husband comes to the country rectory where she has taken a situation as cook and is discovered by Captain Dorvaston, who has fallen in love with her. She asks him to take the drunken fellow away and put him in a ditch. As he is about to obey, the man makes an exclamation which leads the Captain to say, in astonishment, 'So you know the fellow, then?' 'Yes,' she quietly replies; 'he was my husband at one time.' That is all, and the Captain proceeds to carry the man away as the curtain falls. The fall of the curtain at this point provokes thought as to the development of the story. In the old days Lady Huntworth would have given a dramatic recital of her matrimonial wrongs; she and the Captain would probably have been posed in the centre of a stage crowd, and then the curtain would have descended, to rise again in response to the applause, revealing them all in exactly the same attitudes. I certainly think that the dramatists of to-day can congratulate themselves upon having simplified their 'curtains.'

"I am a great believer," continued Mr. Carton, "in the commonplace book. I often use ideas jotted down years before; at the time they may not have seemed to come to much, but they have sometimes blended admirably with other ideas occurring to me long afterwards. Then I attach importance to the names of characters, and whenever I come across a name which is in any way striking I make a note of it. An appropriate name, I think, helps the characterization, and as soon as I have all my *dramatis personæ* well fitted with names the work goes much easier.

"At one time I was very particular as to my writing materials. Nothing but a good pen with a particular kind of paper, sitting at a desk, would suit me. But, like the seasoned smoker, who is content with any old pipe, I got into the habit of scribbling in my easy-chair on any bits of paper that were handy, having a fair copy made on the typewriter. In writing my new play I was agreeably surprised to find that I was able to dictate, my daughter acting as amanuensis. As the result I did an act in twenty-four hours' work, spread over a week."

"I complete my story," wrote Captain Robert Marshall, "write out a full scenario, embracing all subjects of dialogue, incidents, entrances, exits, etc.; and then begin writing the dialogue, of which I generally re-write a great deal after the first copy is typed." To this succinct statement of his method of work I found that the author of "The Second in Command" and so many other successful plays had nothing to add at a personal interview.

A comparison between these confessions as to the secrets of the dramatic workshop will show some points of considerable similarity. On the other hand, important differences will easily be noted which may throw some light on the variations in the finished product when it is seen on the stage.

VIOLA'S PORTRAIT.

By Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny.

PEOPLE say they don't believe in love at first sight, that it is a most improbable contingency, and can't be the real thing. What I say is—let them try it.

I fell in love at first sight. I fell in love hopelessly, idiotically, on a certain afternoon in August. It happened in my friend Merriton's studio, which he rents by the river in the summer months. I never fell out again, and the very smallest bit of experience is more convincing than all the theories and philosophers in the world.

I arrived at the studio at half-past four, to find that Merriton had been ordered away by the doctor at a moment's notice. He was much older than I, double my age in fact, and, while he worked for his living, Fortune had endowed me with an ample share of this world's goods through no merit of my own. But we had always been friends, and I had the run of his studio whenever I liked. Why he had taken a fancy to me, whose ideas on art were of the sketchiest, and who didn't know the difference between a paint-brush and a mahl-stick, or whatever they call it, I could never make out.

When I discovered that Merriton had gone away, I requested the deaf old man who represented the household in the riverside studio to give me tea, and announced that I had come to stay for a couple of days at the least. When it appeared I seated myself sideways on the table at one end of the room, and was on the point of filling my cup from the teapot when the sound of the door opening made me look up.

The vision that greeted my eyes held me spellbound for the moment. Framed in the doorway a girl was standing, in evident hesitation whether to come in or beat a retreat. She was dressed in pale blue, with a big floppy kind of hat of the same colour, and the most splendid wavy chestnut hair imaginable. Her eyes were grey, with long, dark lashes and clearly marked eyebrows, and a mischievous little dimple appeared in each cheek when she smiled; and she smiled directly I looked up, probably at the teapot. She was the loveliest, daintiest little person I had ever seen in my life, and in spite of all the arguments to the contrary I fell head over heels in love there and then.

"May I come in?" she asked, pushing the door a little wider open. "I couldn't make anyone hear the bell, so I just walked in."

"The best thing you could do," I replied, eagerly, remembering my manners; "the man is stone deaf and never hears anyone.

"FRAMED IN THE DOORWAY A GIRL WAS STANDING."

Please come in and let me give you some tea." I closed the door behind her, and drew a chair invitingly forward.

"I am late," she remarked, sitting down and drawing off her gloves; "but then I'm always late for everything. Aunt Jane says she would expect the skies to fall if I wasn't, so perhaps my unpunctuality is a merciful dispensation of Providence, though what grounds she has for anticipating so remarkable a phenomenon I have never inquired."

She drew the chair to the table and laid her gloves beside the tray, quite unruffled by anything apparently unusual in the situation, and I suggested that she would pour out the tea much better than I, a mere man, could hope to. She lifted the lid and peeped into the pot, in the way people do, though what they expect to find there, except tea, I can't imagine. I procured a second cup and saucer from Merriton's factotum, and, reseating myself on the edge of the table, watched my visitor slowly consume two bits of bread and butter while continuing to converse in a light-hearted, irresponsible sort of fashion.

"I've had no tea," she said, looking at me across the tray with a pair of grey eyes that I noticed were soft and deep. "I didn't wait for it. I ought to have been here at four o'clock, and Aunt Jane would be mad with me if she knew how I had been wasting your precious time. So I just came straight on from the river without going home at all."

I was mystified; she seemed to take things so very much for granted, and to consider no explanation necessary. Of course, I might have guessed the reason of it at once had I had my wits about me, and with her next remark enlightenment came.

"It is really good of you, Mr. Merriton, to let me come at this hour at all, but it was so impossible to find time before lunch. Aunt Jane has sent all sorts of injunctions about the portrait. She was unable to come herself owing to a bad chill."

I expressed a polite regret which was far from genuine, and was on the point of explaining that unfortunately I was not Merriton, when she continued:—

"I am down here for six weeks, so I can give you heaps of sittings. Aunt Jane says the portrait is to be full-face and standing up, and I am to be sure my hair is tidy—though if it is she will expect the skies to fall again. You are to avoid the expression of brazen assurance so sadly prevalent in the present day, and at the same time there is to be no suspicion of a simper. That is what Aunt Jane says, and will you please make a note of it?" she finished, her grey eyes brimming over with mischief. I smiled back at her, wild rebellion surging in my heart that Fate had not made me an artist.

Then all in a moment I made up my mind. That this vision of loveliness should have come into my life to walk straight out again, simply because I couldn't paint, was not to be borne. There was one way out of it, and I took it.

"If you wish to please Aunt Jane," she went on, "you will make it as early Victorian as possible. But I refuse to be early Victorian to please anybody, so she consents to leave it with you. You will have the Scylla of Brazen-assurance on the one hand, and the Charybdis of a Simper on the other, and I can't help thinking it is going to give you a good deal of trouble."

I laughed. "That seems more than probable," I assented, filling her cup for the second time, "and a great many sittings will be necessary. The picture will require a lot of thinking over, and must not be begun in a hurry."

"Aunt Jane thinks you would wish to begin it at once."

I shook my head. "That is just where people who know nothing about it are wrong," I answered. "The first thing to be done is to study the subject, which takes longer than you might think. If you won't mind coming here every day——"

"But Aunt Jane thinks you are a very rapid worker."

"There again she is wrong. It depends entirely on the subject. You see," I added hastily, as she looked up with inquiry in her eyes, "I shall have to see you in different sorts of surroundings before deciding how you are to be painted. Some might be entirely unsuitable and look—er—out of drawing."

"Out of drawing?" she said, doubtfully. "Do you mean out of place?"

"Same thing," I replied, feeling that the less I went into details the better; "it may be that a river background would be best, drooping trees and swirling swallows, and so on."

"If it's full of drooping trees and swirling swallows there won't be room for me."

"I must see before I can judge. It's possible you may look best in the garden, or perhaps the studio, or a motor-car, or a hundred other things."

"And how long will it be before you decide?" she asked, in astonishment.

"I can't say off-hand. To-morrow we will go out on the river, and I shall be able to see how you would look with a setting of flowing water and trees."

"I don't think Aunt Jane expects flowing water and trees," she said, doubtfully.

I rose from the table and sauntered across to the empty fireplace, where an array of pipes in varying stages of discoloration showed that Merriton, like most artists, was a smoker.

"If I paint at all I must paint in my own way," I said, firmly, quoting words which I had heard Merriton use on a former occasion. "It may not turn out to be exactly what your Aunt Jane expects; it probably won't" —it certainly wouldn't, there was no doubt about that—"but she must allow me to exercise my own judgment in the matter."

"That is only reasonable," was the slightly hesitating answer. "Perhaps it would be as well not to mention your methods till you have actually started on the picture. Aunt Jane is rather old-fashioned, and she mightn't understand."

I was on the point of asking for a description of the redoubtable Aunt Jane, but, remembering in time that, of course, Merriton was acquainted with her, refrained.

"An artist's life must be delightful," she went on; "full of dreams and ideals."

"Yes," I answered, vaguely.

"To be able to reproduce what you see, is so wonderful."

"It is," I said, sagely.

"You haven't got the face of an artist, either," she continued, looking at me thoughtfully.

"I am full of contradictions," I replied. "I have been ever since I was a child."

"To be able to paint pictures like these" —she waved her hand round the walls and easels, against which canvases, more or less finished, were standing—"must be simply entrancing. What does it feel like to have the artistic temperament, Mr. Merriton?"

"What does it feel like?" I repeated, vacantly. "Oh, I don't know—makes you feel whizzy—and sort of sea-sick when you don't get what you want. It's very overrated."

"It must be," she agreed, opening her eyes wide. "No wonder they paint such funny pictures sometimes. Why do they always wear their hair long?"

"To wipe their brushes in," I answered, promptly; "it saves time, and is probably a survival of the Middle Ages." Then, as she began to laugh, I added, "I don't wear mine long; it's out of fashion. The great thing nowadays is not to look like

"WHAT MUST IT FEEL LIKE TO HAVE THE ARTISTIC TEMPERAMENT, MR. MERRITON?"

what you are, but like something that you aren't."

"I see," she said, slowly. I shrank a little from the scrutiny of those thoughtful grey eyes and hastened to turn the conversation into other channels.

"Come out on the river to-morrow and I will make a start—at studying the subject," I urged; "it's too late this evening."

"When will be the best light?"

"The best light?" I repeated, stupidly. "What for?"

"For the trees and swirling swallows and things," she answered, with some surprise. "Surely you painters are very particular about getting the best light?"

"Of course," I assented, hastily; "swallows always look best about four o'clock. So if that would suit you——"

She rose from her chair and drew on her gloves.

"I will tell Aunt Jane the portrait is to be begun at four o'clock to-morrow," she said.

"The study of the subject will begin," I corrected, opening the door for her. She looked at me still with the puzzled expression in her eyes and seemed to be on the point of speaking. She thought better of it, however, and, having reluctantly watched her departure, I returned to the studio to revise my plans and to inform Merriton's master-of-the ceremonies that I had come to stay.

Fate had evidently sent me the chance of my life, and I was not going to throw it away through any foolish blunder at the outset. The day of reckoning held no terrors for me; I would make my peace with her somehow when the time came, trusting to luck for the avoidance of her Aunt Jane.

Meanwhile I counted the hours that must pass before I should see her again, and spent the next morning in bailing out the boat and collecting Merriton's best silk cushions for her to sit upon.

She was punctual to the minute, and made no objection to the suggestion that we should adjourn forthwith to the river. Her eyes had lost the puzzled expression, and twinkled mischievously when she told me her aunt's cold was so severe that she had lost her voice and been unable to ask any questions. I threw as much sympathy into my reply as politeness seemed to require, but I hadn't brought her down to the river to talk about her Aunt Jane. After settling her comfortably among the cushions and taking my place with the sculls, we shot out into the river, and were soon engaged on more engrossing topics.

She made so pretty a picture lying back among the brightly-coloured cushions, her white dress catching the sunlight through the overhanging trees and the rippling water beyond, that I wished I were an artist in good earnest. No flight of imagination would have been required; if I could have just painted what I saw my fortune would have been made. I suppose my thoughts strayed and I stared at her more earnestly than I was aware of, for she blushed and said, with a laugh:—

"Do you always study your subject so conscientiously, Mr. Merriton? And are you coming to a decision about the picture?"

I shook my head.

"It's not merely a question of background. I must catch the right mood as well."

"But my moods are inexhaustible; I have a different one for every hour of the day."

"It will be my privilege to study them."

"It may take weeks at that rate."

"It probably will."

"Or even months."

I nodded.

"What will Aunt Jane say?"

"I am not going to paint your Aunt Jane."

She laughed, and dipping one hand over let it trail idly in the water.

"She would not make a good picture. Early Victorian hair and spectacles leave something to be desired from a picturesque point of view, to say nothing of elastic-side boots with no heels to them, though I suppose you needn't put them in the picture. Do you think she would make a good subject, Mr. Merriton?"

"She would not be very inspiring," I replied, evasively.

"Fortunately you will not be called upon to attempt it. She will come to inspect the picture when her cold gets better, and what will she say if it isn't even begun?"

"I am not going to be hurried over it," I repeated, praying in my heart that the chill might prove of the obstinate sort; "and summer colds are very hard to get rid of."

She looked at me demurely.

"Aunt Jane is a homœopathist, and she has taken eight different kinds of medicines in the last twenty-four hours, all of which she says may do her good and can't do her any harm. So convalescence may be expected at any moment."

"Sufficient for the day——" I began, but stopped in time, and there was an awkward pause.

"Do you find portraits or landscape the

"'DO YOU FIND PORTRAITS OR LANDSCAPE THE MOST DIFFICULT TO PAINT?' SHE ASKED."

most difficult to paint?" she asked, after an interval.

"They are all the same to me," I replied, carelessly.

"You paint one as often as the other?"

I nodded.

"You show great versatility," she said, turning her eyes away and looking over the water.

I was not quite sure what versatility was, so took refuge in silence, and the talk drifted into safer channels; before I could have believed it possible two whole hours had sped away and the limit of time reached apportioned by Aunt Jane for the first sitting.

"What about the river background?" my guest asked, as we parted.

"I must study it in a different light," I answered. "It's not very satisfactory at this hour of the day. If you would come earlier to-morrow, say at half-past two, the sun would be higher up in the sky."

So she came earlier and we went on the river, and several times again after that. I appeased my conscience with the reflection that I was in deadly earnest, and that she didn't seem to really object. No doubt Aunt Jane would have objected, but I had nothing to do with Aunt Jane and was quite determined to win her niece for my wife. It seemed strange, but so far I did not even know her name, for to ask it would have been to betray a suspicious ignorance, and hints or leading questions had failed to bear fruit. I had discovered that her first name was Viola; it was worked across the corner of a handkerchief she had dropped in the studio one day, and which had since been hidden away amongst my most treasured possessions.

As time went on we seemed to talk less about the portrait and more about other matters. After several excursions on the river she was inclined to demur a little at the difficulty I showed in making up my mind, so I suggested that, although the river effects were by no means exhausted, we should try what a garden scene could do in the way of inspiration. I took her to a shady corner in the pretty, old-fashioned garden, where clematis and crimson ramblers were allowed to run riot in charming disorder against an old stone wall, and the overhanging branches of an ash gave shelter from the sun at all hours of the day.

Gradually it came about that we hardly spoke of the picture at all. When the subject of my decision was broached I invented fresh excuses for delay, invention coming easier with practice, till my ready ingenuity surprised even myself at times, and certainly seemed to allay any doubts in the mind of my guest. Mercifully Providence was on my side, and Aunt Jane's cold held out nobly, slight complications during convalescence keeping her safely within doors. Beyond a half-hearted and perfunctory remonstrance now and then, my fair visitor appeared quite content to idle the hours away in the sunshine and let dull care look after itself.

But dull care refused to be banished for ever. As the day of reckoning approached, steadily and inevitably, the enormity of my conduct loomed larger and more insistent, and the probability of bringing matters to a happy conclusion seemed daily to decrease.

Aunt Jane, having lingered through convalescence in a way that left nothing to be desired, was becoming quite well with a sort of rush that might enable her any day to bear down on the studio on a visit of inspection. Instant flight or prompt confession would then be the only course left open. In sanguine and rose-coloured moments it had seemed to my anxious mind that Viola was not averse to spending the hours with me in the summer sunshine, and looked forward to the completion of the portrait with no very great enthusiasm.

After the first few days she had appeared quite resigned that I should study her moods and make unlimited notes for the best background. In the evenings I had fallen into a habit of strolling back with her through the wood that skirted the river, to part at the gate leading out into the meadows, and I would have walked the whole distance had not discretion kept me out of sight of Aunt Jane.

But there were darker hours when I felt I had no real ground for hope whatever. She just took me for an artist—and artists, as all the world knows, are not as other men, and need never be treated as reasonable creatures. She had been considerately careful not to interfere with my "methods," but when she found to what end those "methods" had been directed she would doubtless never speak to me again. In one of these moments of silent despair Viola announced that her aunt was downstairs, and that in three or four days at most she would be seen at the studio.

That evening, when Viola had gone and I was alone, I determined to write to her. A hundred times during the afternoon, while we were sitting among the vegetables in Merriton's kitchen-garden—all else having failed, I had suggested a background of artichokes and rhubarb plots—confession had been on my lips, but I had lacked courage to put it into words. It had seemed so little a thing when the impulse had first gripped me, just to hold my tongue and allow myself to be mistaken for someone else ; now the affair assumed a very different aspect. How could I break to her that, so far from painting a portrait, I did not know one paint from another ; that I had enticed her to the studio in my friend's absence entirely under false pretences, and merely for the joy of being in her presence? Would she forgive me? Or should I see the friendliness in those dear grey eyes turn to withering scorn? I dared not risk it.

So I decided to write, to tell her first of my love, and make confession after receiving the answer. I could reasonably hope to win forgiveness with the bond of declared love between us ; and if she refused her consent, then my deception became a matter of little moment one way or the other.

I did not know her name, but with a flash of inspiration remembered I should probably find it in Merriton's engagement-book, which I knew he kept on the desk by the fireplace. Sure enough, "Miss Delmore, four o'clock," under the date of August 15th, the day on which she had first appeared at the studio, told me all I wished to know ; and, taking the discovery as an omen of good luck, I took up the pen with renewed hope. I told her simply of my love, and asked her to be my wife, and was on the point of signing it with my name when I remembered it was only as Merriton she knew me. So I signed it "J. Merriton," with inverted commas to salve my conscience, and posted it, and then lay awake all night wishing I hadn't.

Next morning I employed the time walking restlessly from the studio to the garden and from the garden back to the studio, cursing the mad impulse that had made me impersonate another man ; cursing the fate that had made me anything but a portrait painter ; and, above all, mildly cursing Aunt Jane for having got well so rapidly. In the afternoon I wandered disconsolately through the wood to the gate at which we had so often parted, and the first object that greeted my eyes was Viola coming across the meadow towards me, bathed in the sunlight of the glorious summer's day, and turning my world back into Paradise again.

I opened the gate and went to meet her, both hands outstretched. She looked rather surprised, but put her own into them without a word.

"You received my letter?" I asked.

"What letter?"

"The letter I wrote yesterday and posted to you last night," I replied, with a sinking heart.

She shook her head.

"I have had no letter."

"I addressed it to 'Miss Delmore, Cheylesmere Lodge.'"

"To Miss Delmore? That's Aunt Jane," she replied.

"Oh!" I said, blankly.

"My name is St. Cross. My mother was Aunt Jane's sister."

"Oh!" I said again, thinking of the contents of my letter ; and then Aunt Jane and the letter and everything else went clean out of my head as I realized that her hands were

"I WENT TO MEET HER, BOTH HANDS OUTSTRETCHED."

still in mine, and she had made no attempt to release them.

"Viola, I love you," I murmured. "You know I love you. Will you be my wife?"

She dropped her eyes and hesitated.

"I don't think I can marry an artist," she said, slowly; "the artistic temperament must be so tiresome to live with."

"But," I stammered, "but——" and there I stuck.

"Yes," she repeated, "but——?"

"An artist needn't always have the artistic temperament," I urged.

"Then he couldn't be a real artist; and no one who sees your pictures, Mr. Merriton, can doubt that for a moment."

"You needn't be afraid of my temperament—you needn't, really. There is nothing artistic about it—rather the contrary."

"There must be if you are an artist. That is why I will never marry an artist," she replied with decision, withdrawing her hands from mine and looking me straight in the face.

"But I am not an artist!" I cried, at bay, "and I haven't got the artistic temperament; I never have had it and never will. If that is your only objection, Viola, it doesn't exist."

She raised her eyebrows.

"But you said it made you feel all whizzy and sea-sick when you didn't get what you wanted."

"It wasn't true. I don't know anything about it."

"Then how did you propose to paint my portrait?"

"I didn't propose to; it was you proposed it. I never meant to; I don't know how to mix the paints. I'm not Merriton—I never shall be—I mean I never shall be an artist." I explained, confusedly. "My only excuse is that I fell in love with you the first moment I saw you; and now I suppose you will say I have behaved abominably and taken you in, and will never speak to me again."

She dropped her eyes and hesitated.

"Perhaps I might refuse to speak to you again," she replied, slowly, "if——"

"If what?"

"If you *had* taken me in."

"What do you mean?"

"In the July number of the *Battersea Magazine*——" she began.

"Yes?" I said, wondering what it had to do with it.

"There was a portrait of Mr. Merriton among 'famous artists of the day.' He is nearly bald, and has a grey beard," she added.

"So you knew from the beginning?" I asked, after a pause.

"I thought you were Mr. Merriton for just twenty-four hours," she replied, demurely. If anybody ever felt a fool, it was I at that moment.

"And you knew all along that the portrait-painting was a sham?"

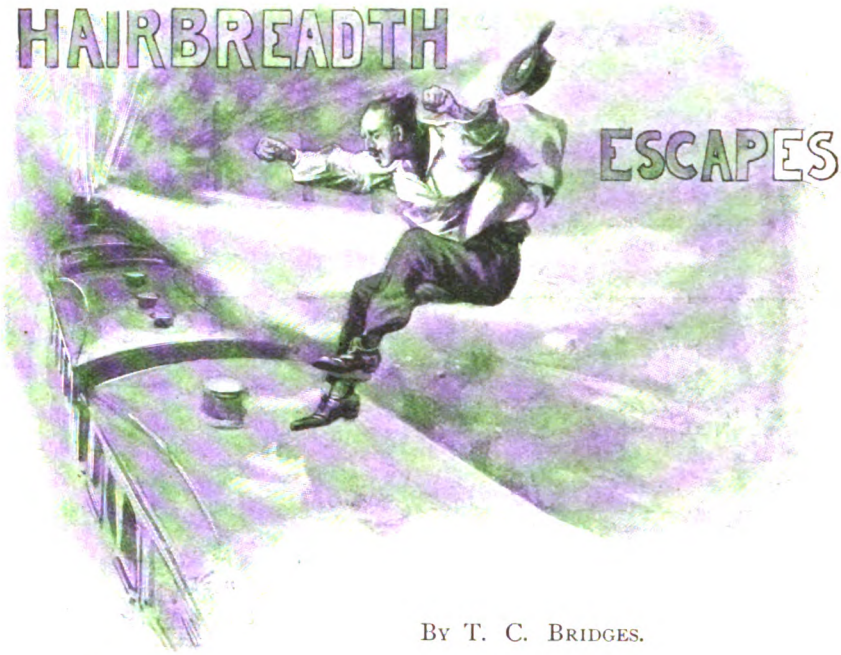
She didn't answer, and my courage returned with a rush.

"In that case," I said, boldly, taking her in my arms, "I have my answer. If you do not marry me now, it is *your* conduct that will have been too disgraceful for words."

Viola seemed to agree with this, and, as the rest of the interview is nobody's business but our own, it won't be recorded here.

I heard from Merriton later on. He was in a bit of a stew about a letter he had received from a lady in the neighbourhood, apparently in answer to one he had no recollection of having written. He thought he wouldn't be coming back to the studio just at present. I have advised him to spend the autumn in Florence.

HAIRBREADTH ESCAPES



By T. C. Bridges.

MOST of us have known a moment when Death's wing brushed in passing, a horrible second or minute which seemed as if it must be the last in this world. Such hairbreadth escapes happen every day, and among those of recent date possibly none more sensational has been recorded than that of a certain small boy while travelling from London to Buckingham on a day in June last. The child was leaning out of the carriage window when the door burst open and the horrified father saw his son suddenly disappear. Frantically jerking the communication cord, he brought the train to a standstill and leaped out. Imagine his amazed delight on seeing the boy on his feet, running towards him along the up line! At that very moment the up express came roaring on, and before anything could be done to stop it the engine had knocked the boy down and passed over him. Utterly overcome by the second catastrophe the father staggered back. He could hardly believe his eyes when, the train having passed, he saw the child pick himself up and again come pluckily toddling back. Except for cuts on the head the little chap was practically uninjured. Indeed, the father's mental sufferings had been far worse than the physical ones of his child.

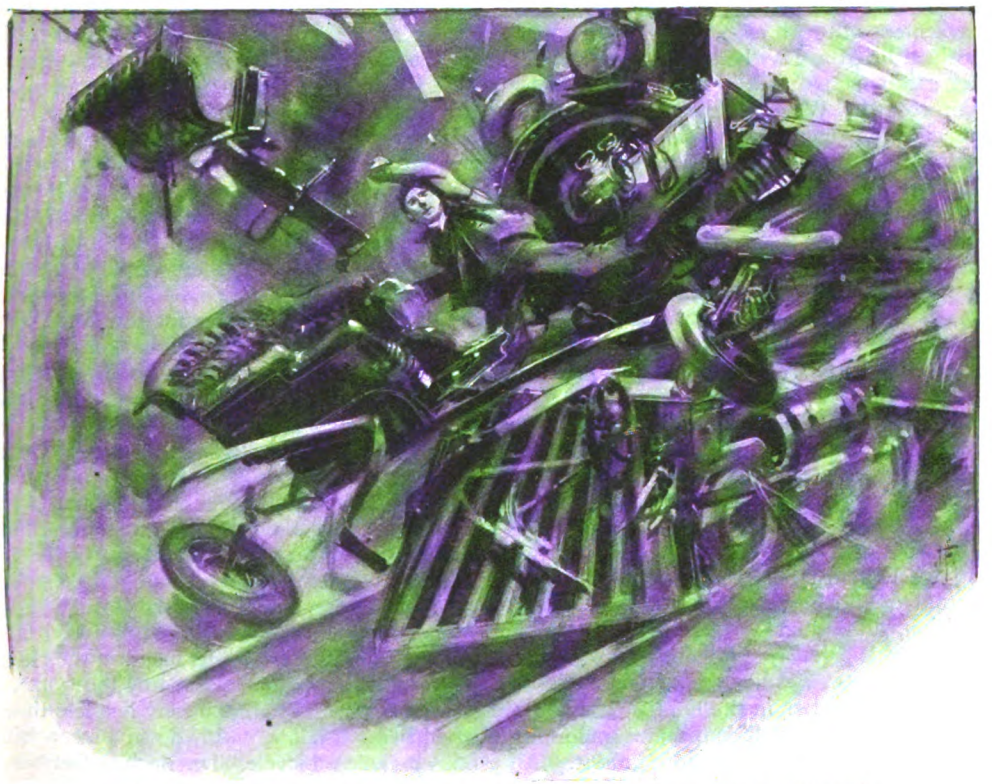
There has lately been a sort of epidemic of accidents of this kind. A most extraordinary incident was witnessed at the Welsh station of Pontlottyn one afternoon last spring. A train was running into the station when a boy of about six began racing along the platform by the side of the engine. A man rushed forward to stop him, but before he could reach him the youngster stumbled and pitched head-foremost off the platform, under the very wheels of the engine. When the horrified spectators dared to look again, they saw the child lying crying on the far side of the rails. By an almost miraculous chance the driving-rod of the engine had caught him as he fell and flung him clear of the wheels. Beyond a few bruises he was absolutely uninjured.

There is a Swiss workman who tells an astonishing story of a close call, and one which has the merit of being perfectly true. One day in November, 1901, he was busy repairing the roof of a small railway station

near Interlaken when the cleat on which he was resting broke away and he found himself sliding helplessly downwards. Exactly below him was an iron railing, and to avoid being impaled upon the spikes which topped it the man, as he reached the edge, made a desperate jump. At this very moment an express train came rushing through the station, and the man landed square on the roof of a carriage. Clinging like grim death to the ventilator chimney, he was carried on to the next station, four miles away, where the train stopped. There he was helped down, and found to be none the worse except for a shaking.

All those who work upon railways are liable to find themselves in tight places, but a tighter can hardly be conceived than, when speeding down a mountain railway on a hand-car at thirty miles an hour, to suddenly become aware that a special is panting upwards around the curve in front. This was the actual predicament in which a party of four platelayers found themselves upon the Marias Pass, by which the Great Northern Railway of America climbs the Rockies. There was no time to pull up, no possibility of stopping the advancing train. The only alternative was to jump. Two of the men did so. The line here runs along a mere ledge cut in the mountain-side. Both the unfortunate fellows crashed to their death among the rocks below. Of the two who stuck to the car, one was crushed to pulp under the wheels of the oncoming engine; the other, in some extraordinary fashion, was flung quite ten feet into the air. He described a wide curve and pitched unhurt into a clump of bushes which grew on a projecting rock about twenty feet below the edge of the cliff. It was just the one possible place where he could have fallen safely. A yard either way, and he would have dropped into the rock-strewn bed of the river which brawled nearly a hundred feet below.

Level crossings are more common in the United States than in this country, and form a frequent cause of accident. In August, 1906, a New York lawyer, Conklin by name, was in the act of driving his motor over one of these crossings near Orangeburg, when an express dashed up at nearly sixty miles an hour. Mr. Conklin put on speed, but it was too late. The locomotive struck the car



"THE LOCOMOTIVE STRUCK THE CAR AND SENT IT WHIRLING IN A FOUNTAIN OF SPLINTERS."

and sent it whirling in a fountain of splinters. People rushed to the rescue and began hunting for the unfortunate victim's body. They could not find it. The train had been brought to a standstill and passengers joined in the search, but not a trace of the motor's driver could be found. At last it occurred to the engine-driver to walk round his engine. There was Mr. Conklin stretched on the little platform above the cow-catcher. He was stunned and had several ribs broken, but he has since recovered, and is perhaps the only man alive who can boast of having survived a collision with an express train running at full speed.

While Mr. Conklin lay in hospital recovering from his injuries another accident occurred in the near neighbourhood of New York. A small steam yacht with a cheery pleasure party aboard was steaming out to sea when she was run down and capsized by a string of refuse scows, which were being towed back into the harbour. Of the eight aboard the yacht four clung to the keel of their vessel and were picked up; the others sank and vanished from sight. Among the latter was a Miss Fanny Day, and it was the sad duty of the rescued to go and inform her family of her death. Imagine if you can the utter amazement of the messengers when they were received by Miss Day herself, alive and well! Her escape is one of the most extraordinary upon record. When the yacht turned over the girl was drawn by suction right underneath the barge that had run them down. She did not lose consciousness, but rose again, only to strike her head against something hard.

Realizing that she was still underneath the scow and with breath fast failing she gave herself up for lost. Suddenly she was shot upwards and found herself out of water, but in pitch darkness. Something touched her face. She grasped it and found it was a chain, to which she clung desperately. As soon as she could get breath she screamed vigorously, and suddenly a great lid above her was lifted, and two men pulled her up into the light of day.

What had happened was this. A load of garbage had just been dumped through the bottom of the barge at the moment of the collision, and when Miss Day rose through the water she had providentially struck the trap, which was still open. This closed behind, leaving her in the hold of the scow, imprisoned in inky darkness and indescribable filth, but quite safe and unhurt. All the other three who sank with her were drowned, and their bodies were not recovered till long afterwards.

Among startling escapes from drowning, an accident which happened in Dublin in 1902 deserves to be recorded. It was one Saturday night in November of that year, and the fog was thick as soup, when a cab containing four persons missed its way and was driven straight into the Alexandra Basin. Under ordinary circumstances nothing could have prevented every mother's son from drowning; but, by a chance which a novelist might shy at, the cab happened to fall exactly across the mooring-rope of a ship, the horse on one side, the cab on the other. The cabman pluckily stuck to his box, and the unhappy passengers, up to their waists in icy water and boxed like rats in a trap, yelled frantically for help. The ship's watchman heard them and threw over a rope. One by one they were all got safe aboard the vessel, and in the end the only death that took place was that of the unfortunate horse, which, although it succeeded in breaking loose from its harness, was drowned.

Speaking of falls, Scarborough visitors were treated to a sensation one August afternoon in 1903. A gentleman was riding along the esplanade when his horse bolted and galloped madly down the steep asphalted footpath known as Birdcage Walk. That the animal kept its feet at all was a marvel, yet not only did it do so, but it jumped a seat and iron railings, and ended by leaping straight down the cliff, landing with a fearful clatter on the asphalt below, near to the Cliff Bridge entrance. There was a rush to the spot. Of course, everyone expected to find both horse and rider killed. But they were not. The man, although stunned, soon recovered sufficiently to walk, and as for the horse, the creature was absolutely none the worse.

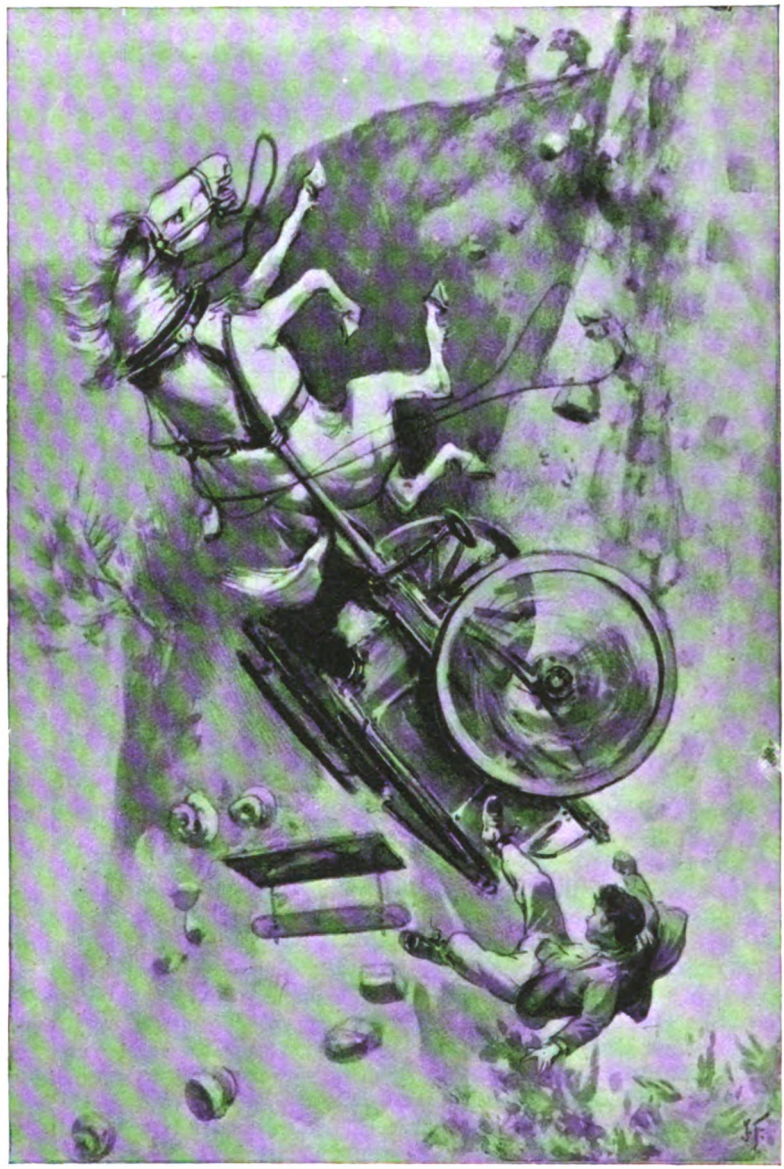
A very similar but even more startling episode occurred at Angers, the capital of the French Department of Maine et Loire. A cavalry charger was being exercised by a groom in the Rue de Brissac, when, as it was crossing the railway bridge, it was startled by an approaching tramcar. The animal, which was a great, powerful bay, plunged violently, and then with one tremendous bound cleared the four-foot parapet of the bridge and dropped to the railway line full forty feet below. The horse kept its feet and the rider his seat, and neither was a penny the worse.

One never feels more utterly helpless than when being run away with down a steep hill on a brakeless bicycle. Dr. Bach, a German, while touring in Switzerland in the summer

THE ANIMAL PLUNGED VIOLENTLY, AND THEN WITH ONE TREMENDOUS BOUND CLEARED THE FOUR-FOOT PARAPET OF THE BRIDGE."

of 1906, had a most thrilling experience of this kind. He was cycling down the pass near Göschenen when his brake snapped, and the machine darted forward at terrific speed down the steep road. At the bottom is the bridge which spans the deep gorge of the River Reuss. The doctor did his best to guide his flying machine on to the bridge, but failed. The front wheel struck the near wall, and the rider was flung clean over the far parapet. In falling he caught a chain hanging from one of the girders. The shock nearly dragged his arms from their sockets, but he was a powerful man and succeeded in keeping his hold. He found himself swinging in mid-air, suspended over the river which roared far below him. A motor-car came booming down the pass. The unfortunate doctor yelled for help, but he could not be seen from the bridge, and the noise of the machinery and the sound of the river drowned his cries. The car passed on. Minutes went by, and the rattle of horses' feet came to his ears. A carriage and pair trotted rapidly across the bridge. Again he shouted and again his cries were unheard, although the carriage passed within a few feet of him. Minutes dragged by like hours; the strain became unbearable, the fingers of the unfortunate man growing numb. At last, just as the doctor was on the point of giving up and letting himself drop into the raging torrent beneath, two peasants came by and saw him. They got a rope, made a noose, flung it over him, and pulled him up. He fainted, and had to be carried into Göschenen, where he lay ill for a long time. His hands were perfectly raw and his arms swollen in the most extraordinary fashion. Yet he has reason to be grateful for as narrow an escape from death as ever fell to any man's lot.

The gorge of the Avon has been the scene of several sensational escapes from imminent death. One day in July, 1903, a baker's trap, in which was seated a blind lad named Begbie, was left standing near the gully, close by the Clifton Suspension Bridge. The horse, trying to graze, gradually wandered too near to the edge of the precipice, and cart, horse, and boy tumbled over together. The height of the cliff at this



"THE CART ROLLED OVER AND THE BOY WAS FLUNG INTO A TREE."

point is two hundred feet, and the chances are many thousands to one against any creature, even a cat, surviving such a fall. But as it fell the cart rolled over and the boy was flung into a tree, from which he was afterwards rescued uninjured. What is almost more amazing, although the cart was smashed to pieces, the horse, beyond a few cuts, was little the worse.

Upon another occasion a Bristol lady was driving on Clifton Down when the horses took fright and galloped frantically straight for the edge of the towering cliffs above the river. There were many people about, but none near enough to help, and the lady and her coachman seemed doomed to a frightful death. Not a dozen yards from the brink the horses swerved slightly, and one wheel of the carriage struck a tree. The coachman was thrown out and fell on the pass, and the lady flung open the door and sprang out. Next instant the horses dashed forward again, and, hurling themseves over the rocks, they and the carriage crashed to the bottom.

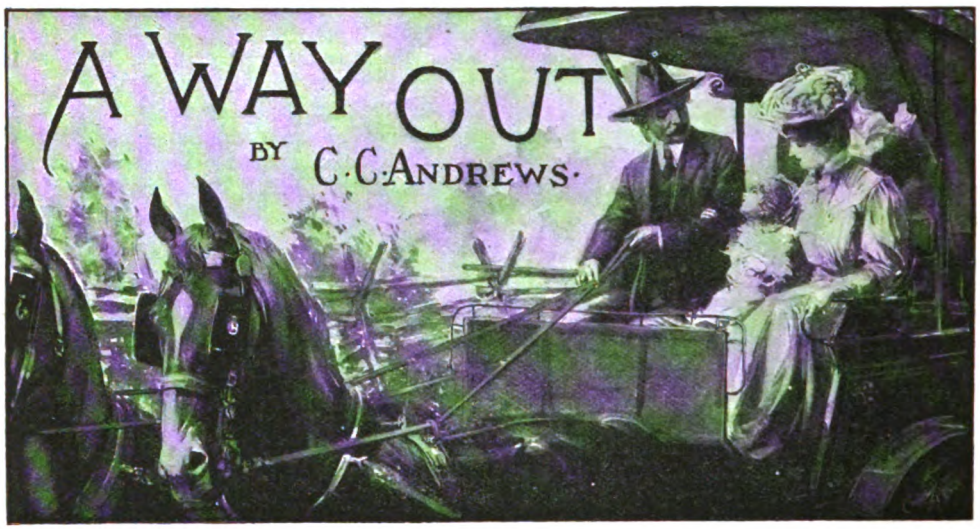
The freaks of explosives are proverbial. They were never better illustrated than at La Bathie on New Year's Eve, 1902. A contractor named Zachetti was, with the aid of another man, unpacking a case of dynamite in a shed when, for some unknown reason, the stuff exploded. Zachetti and his assistant were blown literally to atoms and the shed was utterly wrecked. A third man was sitting on a bench barely five yards away from the others. The bench was shattered, yet the man was only slightly stunned. Otherwise he was quite unhurt.

Another escape which borders on the miraculous was witnessed at Perranporth, in Cornwall, in the previous year. Some blasting gelatine, which had been accidentally spilt by the derailing of a trolley near Nobel's factory, exploded with terrible force, killing three men outright. A fourth, a carter named Stevens, was lifted into the air by the force of the explosion, and picked up forty yards away. His hat was torn from his head and blown to rags, and his horse, close to which he had been standing, was reduced to mangled fragments of flesh. Yet, except for a wound on one leg, Stevens was not injured.

It is one thing to be hurled instantaneously into the presence of imminent peril, another and a much more terrible one to see danger approaching and be utterly unable to avoid it. A more terrifying experience than that of William Lee, a well-known resident of Brookfield, Connecticut, is almost impossible to conceive. He was busy cutting wood with a motor-saw worked by wind-power, when, in placing a log in position, he slipped and fell upon the carriage. Unable to get free, he found himself being borne relentlessly towards the sharp teeth of the whirling saw, nearer and nearer, until at last the teeth actually began to bite into his flesh. At that instant the motor suddenly ceased working, and with a last desperate effort Lee flung himself from the carriage. His body had hardly reached the ground before the motor started again. He had been saved by a momentary drop in the wind.

An equally horrible ordeal was the lot of a Parisian lady doctor, Mme. Azema. One night in March, 1903, she was called to see a patient at a private hotel in the Rue Greuze. In the semi-darkness of the hall Mme. Azema stepped into the well of the lift, under the impression that it was the staircase, and closed the door behind her. The door was self-locking and the lady found herself a prisoner, with the lift slowly descending upon her. She screamed, but no help came, and, frightened almost out of her wits, she sank on her knees awaiting death. Down came the lift. It was within a foot of the prisoner's head when the concierge, hearing her screams, rushed out, stopped the lift, and rescued the poor woman, who was fainting with fright. Madame afterwards recovered damages for "shock to her emotions."

One speaks of being within an inch of death. There is a clerk in the employ of the Great Western Railway Company who can truly aver that he has been within half that distance of a sudden end. Many will remember the dreadful accident at Slough Station on June 16th, 1900, when the Plymouth Express ran into a stationary passenger train, causing the death of five people and injury to more than thirty others. The station also was partially wrecked by the terrific impact. At the moment of the accident the clerk in question was busy in the booking-office. The crash startled him and he looked up. At that instant a great mass of roofing glass came down and in its fall broke into several pieces. One piece which weighed several pounds almost grazed his nose, and, falling sideways on the book in which he had been writing, cut clean through twenty pages. Another fragment almost as heavy and spear-shaped fell on the desk and penetrated the wood to a depth of over an inch.



THE wagon, with its gaily-striped awning, its varnished green-and-white body, and wheels picked out with vivid flecks of scarlet paint, moved through the brilliant sunshine of the hot afternoon, not unlike some huge, ponderous, blundering butterfly, swaying and dipping as it jogged along; the road, winding round the edge of the forest, was not too level. The warm, yellow dust lay so thickly upon it that the roll of the wheels was all muffled; the two fine horses—everybody in that section of the State knew George Thurston's pair of English-bred roans—trotted on soberly, the reins slack upon their shining backs, a glisten of perspiration showing upon their sleek sides. So hot was it beneath the gay wagon-cover that the bride presently gave an involuntary gasp, and softly dabbed her crimson cheeks with the little lace-edged handkerchief from her waistbelt. Her husband, glancing down at her, smiled, and pushed his hat back from his sunburnt forehead and thick, curling fair hair. George Thurston was a handsome fellow, big and blond and slow.

"Guess you find it pretty middling hot, don't ye, Lily, dear?"

"Middling?" echoed the bride. "If this is only middling, what would you call quite, I wonder?" Her little laugh was musical from pure happiness; she pressed her slight, muslin-clad shoulder against his sleeve. "Are we nearly there, George?"

"Pretty nigh—we'll see the chimneys in a little. Say, Lily, I hope you'll like it, darling."

"Like it? Your home and mine—the home you're giving me?" Her pretty, clear English voice thrilled. "I love it already," she said, softly.

She was four-and-twenty, and in her lace-decked flowered muslin and big rose-wreathed hat — both, like the elaborate puffs and waves of her brown hair, having a touch of exaggeration in their style that was slightly theatrical—looked, with her soft round curves and girlish colouring, not more than nineteen. Half-a-dozen years of grease-paint, footlight glare, and late hours had failed to rob her of her rosy English bloom. It was on the stage of the gaudy, comfortless theatre of the neighbouring township, in the chorus of a London "musical comedy," that George Thurston, some three months before, had first seen her. In her short skirts and high-heeled shoes, with slender bare arms and hair hanging to her waist in a great braid, she had looked a mere pretty child, and had sung her lines and gone through her "business" with a dainty grace and archness which had almost robbed both of their banality. Thurston, watching, had seen nothing of all the glittering show but that one small figure; the man was bewitched, and knew it; he left the theatre saying to himself, quite finally, that this was the woman

he would marry. But he had watched her performance some three or four times before he contrived to obtain an introduction to her through a source that satisfied him — he shrank sensitively from taking an advantage which the fact of her profession might have given. It was perhaps something of a shock to discover that the Miss Lilian Merivale of the programmes was, in private life, Mrs. Morrison and a widow; and a greater shock still to find her the mother of a little girl of three. But this surprise, quickly over, had made no difference in either his resolution or infatuation.

His brief and eager courtship—he had not been slow in that—had passed without a check or cloud; even his widowed sister, middle-aged and gaunt, stiff with the inborn severity and rigour of the typical New England village woman, had succumbed to the girl's charm, and welcomed her. Now she had been his wife for seven halcyon days, and his happiness was still a thing of bewildering bedazzlement, even more marvellous in the reality than it had been in anticipation. That this dainty, sparkling creature, this miracle of sweetness and beauty, should be his own, should love him, moved his very soul with a wonder and half-incredulous gratitude which were almost pathetic. Something of them was in his eyes now as he looked at her.

"Love it? Well, I hope you will, dear. I guess it will be a good deal of a change, though; that's what I was thinking." Then he laughed, understanding, it seemed, her little glance and gesture. "No, I won't say again that it's queer you married me. I know you'd had a real rough time—rougher, I reckon, than you've told me. But it's most almighty queer that you wanted to, darling!"

"We both wanted to," declared Lily, promptly. "We made up our minds quite as soon as you made up yours. In fact, if you hadn't proposed to us we would have proposed to you. Wouldn't we, Rosy?"

Her child was nestled so closely against her on the wagon-seat that she seemed part of herself. Her sunbonnet had fallen back from her golden head; her little face, lovely as a cherub's, was all moist and pink with the heat. Roused by her mother's question—she had been half asleep—she surveyed her step-father with a solemn attention, and nodded. Then she squirmed herself between the two, wriggled a hand into Thurston's pocket, and extracted, after some struggling, a partially eaten cake which she had deposited there half an hour before.

Thurston laughed and lifted her on to his knee. The involuntary jealousy which he had felt of the dead had never been extended to the child; he had, on the contrary, been honestly triumphant in the fact that she "took to him." It was good that she was so young, he had once said to Lily, simply; she would scarcely know that he was not in reality her father—he loved children. In a moment he pointed ahead with a nod—the chimneys were in sight.

"There you are, Lily; you'll see all the house in a minute, and Luella waiting on the porch, most likely. And if you see lavender it's her ribbons—never knew Luella dressed for company when she didn't have lavender ribbons somewhere."

But there was no Luella visible when presently the wagon drove into the great square enclosure surrounding the picturesque, roomy, substantial Thurston house, and he lifted his wife down. Instead there stood before the door a little low carry-all, with a plump brown horse half asleep in the shafts, while seated upon the veranda steps was a stout brown man with his hands in his pockets. Thurston exclaimed in surprise that that "was never Mr. Rogers," and he got upon his feet, lifting his hat to the bride.

"Sort of had a kind of a notion it was," he drawled, smiling. "How's yourself, Mr. Thurston? And this is Mrs. Thurston?" His eyes, sleepily keen, surveyed the girlish figure in the pretty frock and the rosy face under the flower-wreathed hat with a twinkle of approval. "Proud to make your acquaintance, ma'am, and so will Mrs. Rogers be first chance she can catch. She'd have been around with me now but that she's got her quilting-bee on, and you can't budge Miranda from a quilting with hitching-ropes. And this is Sissy, eh? Say, some folks are real pretty, seems to me." He swung the child up to his shoulder, smacked a hearty kiss on each round cheek, and set her down again. "Guess you're looking around for Mrs. Hayter, Mr. Thurston. Sorry to tell ye she's home. She's sick."

"Is that so? What, her heart attacks again?" Thurston questioned, quickly.

Mr. Rogers "reckoned it might be." Anyhow, she had looked "powerful sick" when she drove by in the buggy, and Hannah Crane, who was with her, had seemed "sort of scared." Mrs. Hayter, it appeared, had stopped at his gate, had said that she was ill, and had begged him to watch for her brother's return; she was so sure of "a bad spell" that she preferred to be at home.

Hannah Crane should, unless she were worse, return in the morning; she hoped Mrs. Thurston would "make out to get along" until then. As for Sampson Whittaker, he was "over to Leadville," it being market-day, and the house was consequently left empty. Mrs. Rogers would have "come along" but for the quilting, but she would send Samantha Stone around in time to cook breakfast, if Mrs. Thurston pleased. Having delivered himself to this effect, Mr. Rogers prepared to mount into the carry-all. Lily turned to her husband, flushed with a sudden thought.

"Your sister has been so sweet to me," she said, hurriedly. "You know, she would have had Rosy with her this last week only I thought she might be happier if she stayed with people she knew. Don't you think she would like it if I went to see her?"

"What, now?" Thurston ejaculated.

"Of course. It only seems kind, particularly when she has been working so hard to get things ready for me; perhaps it is that which has made her ill. As Mr. Rogers lives so near to Basset, don't you suppose he would drive me in and bring me back if I ask him?"

"Of course he would. But I'll drive you, dear, if you really feel like going."

But Lily remonstrated. That would not be at all the same thing, she declared. Luella would take her going alone as a proof that she was as concerned as she ought to be and as grateful as she felt. Moreover, the horses were tired, and Rosy was dreadfully sleepy. Do let her have her own way and go with Mr. Rogers—she would not be a moment longer than she could help. He could show what a clever housekeeper he was by putting Rosy to bed for a nap and getting supper ready against she came back. Of course the bridegroom yielded; of course the bride had her way, and equally of course Mr. Rogers was amiably ready to do anything that was asked so prettily. In a minute or two Lily had driven off in the carry-all, and Thurston, lifting his step-daughter in his arms, entered the house.

The little, sleepy, golden head was drooping on his shoulder, the blue eyes closing; he carried her straight through the great kitchen into the cool north parlour that opened from it, and laid her carefully down upon the lounge. Then he returned to the kitchen, looking round it. The fire still smouldered in the stove; upon the large white-scrubbed table were the pastry-board and flour-barrel and a dish of apples peeled and sliced; Luella, he reflected, had evidently been busy cooking at the time of her attack; something pink lay on the floor; he picked it up. It was a gingham apron, and had been dragged off with such violence and haste that one string was broken. The frown that clouded his face as he put it down was not caused by anxiety, although he was an affectionate brother; he was invaded by a curious sense of disappointment and depression.

He put some firing into the stove and set on the kettle—he must not forget Lily's command to get supper, he thought—and went out. The two fine roans were his pride; by the time the beautiful creatures were fed and watered his depression was forgotten. He was whistling as he crossed towards the big barn which stood rather away from the other outbuildings—had Sampson Whittaker recollected to take the old waggon-harness to Leadville for repair? Pushing the door wide and sauntering in, his involuntary ejaculation of surprise changed to a shout of astonishment and warning. For in the dim light he had scarcely seen the man who lay upon a great heap of straw, when with an oath he sprang stumbling to his feet, aiming a wild blow at him, and a revolver was shining in his hand. With his shout Thurston caught the arm as it was raised, striking the weapon upward, and it fell to the floor between them.

"Guess you're a trifle too handy with that, my friend," he said, quietly.

"I—I—was asleep," the other stammered, hoarsely.

"Ah! Do you generally wake so almighty sudden? Guess you'd best break yourself of the habit. The next fellow may chance to be a bit quicker with his gun than you are, and if that's so there will be a funeral right smart," said Thurston, dryly. He stooped and picked up the revolver. "You walk out ahead of me and keep your hands clear of your pockets, or you'll find I can be kind of sudden myself."

The man shrugged and obeyed. He walked with a jaunty swing and carriage of the shoulders, and yet swayed as if he were weak or deadly tired. Thurston, following, saw as he passed out into the sunlight that his clothing was all crushed and disordered, and wondered how long he might have been lying in the barn. The other suddenly broke into a laugh, swung about, and faced him.

"You may as well give that back to me, Thurston. I sha'n't put a bullet through you, old man!"

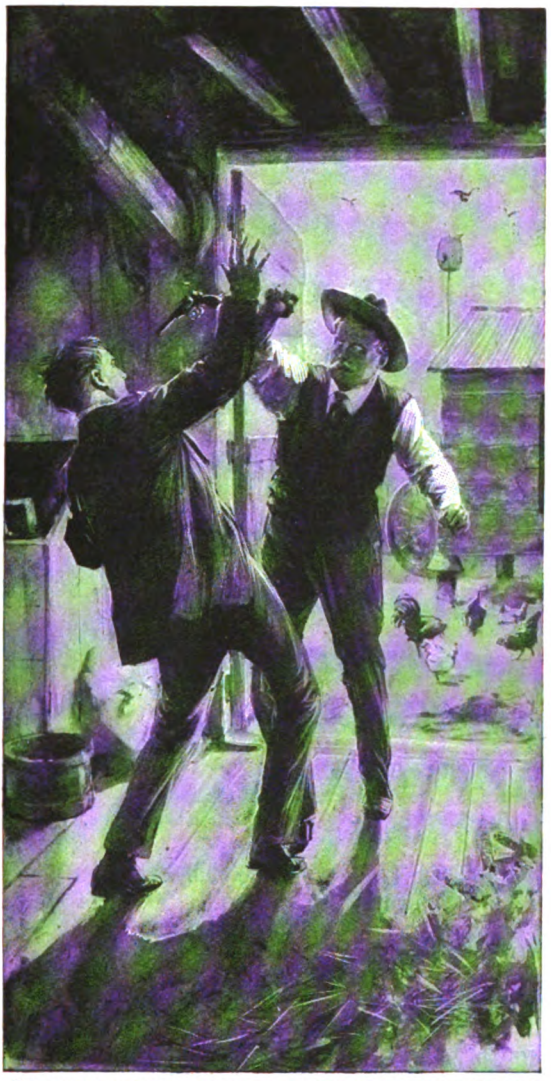
"Maynard!" cried Thurston.

His amazement was so great that he had surrendered the revolver before he knew it. The other pocketed it and nodded, putting out his hand.

"As you Yankees say—that's so," he answered, and laughed. "You didn't know me, though?"

"Not for a minute — guess I do now," said Thurston, heartily. His sunburnt face had flushed; he wrung the other's soft, slim fingers. "A fellow don't forget in a hurry the man that saved his life, Maynard; or I don't, anyway. You been in that barn long? Went in because you found the house empty, I suppose?"

"That's it," Maynard nodded. "I've always recollected your invitation to look you up, old fellow, and being in this part of the world for a few days I thought I'd do it. But I'd had a beastly long tramp—missed the road, I fancy, and was so done when I got here that I could hardly stand. By Jove, I must have been pretty sound asleep in there, and dreaming, too!"



"THURSTON CAUGHT THE ARM AS IT WAS RAISED, STRIKING THE WEAPON UPWARD."

"Missed the road? Where is it you've come from, then?" asked Thurston, quickly.

"Where? Oh, that way." He made a vague gesture towards the forest. "I say, you're looking uncommonly fit."

"Yes; guess I don't need to have the world use me any better," Thurston answered, contentedly. "How has it been treating you?"

"Me? Deucedly ill!" said Maynard, curtly. He met the other's look of concern and laughed again. "Oh, that's all right; I shall pull through," he said, airily.

They were moving across the grass towards the porch leading to the kitchen, and doing so presented a curious contrast enough. Beside Thurston's broad, deep-chested height, Maynard, dark, slight, and quick-moving, looked almost boy-like, though in face, as probably in years, he seemed considerably the elder of the two. It was this inferiority of inches and comparative delicacy of physique which had enhanced Thurston's appreciation of the fact that the other, as he had said, had saved his life. The affair had been simply the incident of an ill-aimed bullet while on a solitary shooting expedition among the mountains, the infuriated she-bear which it had missed, a fall and a twisted ankle in turning to run, and a lucky shot just in time from a source unseen. It was so narrow an escape that Thurston must needs have been fervently grateful to his rescuer, but the superficial polish and ease of the Englishman, his cleverness and ready tongue, the grace with which he made light of the whole thing had fascinated the slower, simpler man; something of the impulsiveness which later marked his eager courtship had been in his admiration of the other. When, at the end of a couple of weeks' companionship, they

parted, he had warmly pressed Maynard to visit him whenever his business should render it possible. What that business was he had not asked and hardly wondered. Maynard's facile tongue had said but little of himself.

They went into the kitchen, and Maynard stumbled into, rather than sat down in, a great cushioned chair by the hearth. The fire was blazing, and the place hot with sunshine, but he shivered as though he were cold. Once more his dishevelled look and haggard, exhausted aspect struck Thurston and set him wondering. Maynard looked apprehensively round the room.

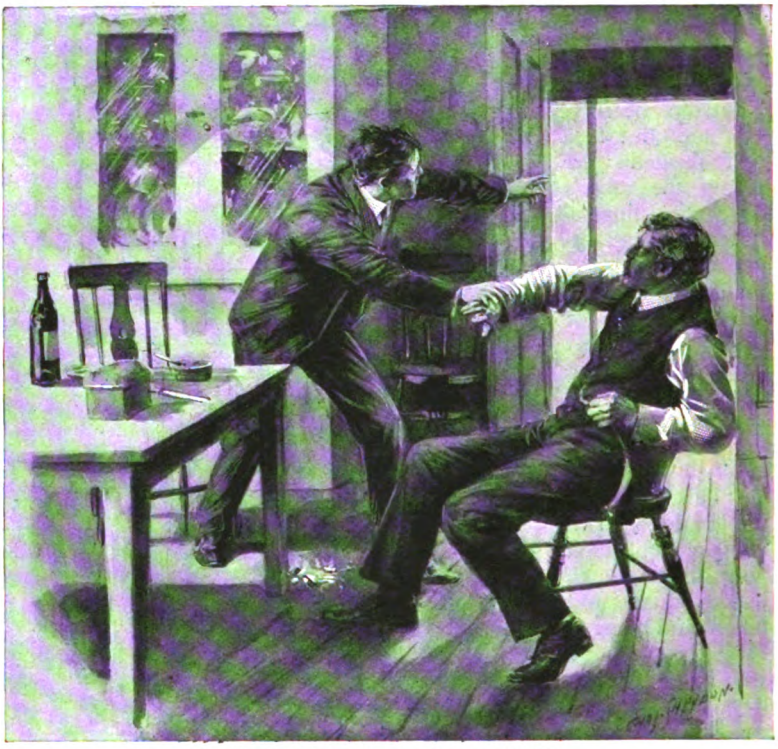
"Did you say there was anybody in the house? Nobody seemed to hear when—when I knocked."

"Just now there isn't anybody. They'll be along directly," Thurston answered; the odd furtiveness of manner and tone escaped him. "See here, Maynard, you look mighty queer. I miss my guess if you haven't got a chill."

Maynard gave no answer. Thurston turned into the sitting-room. For the moment he had practically forgotten his wife; the sight of the sleeping child upon the lounge gave him an instant's sense of shock which nearly brought a laugh to follow it. But his face was grave as he took a bottle of brandy and a glass from a cupboard and returned to the kitchen, graver still as he poured out a great dram of the spirit and watched the other gulp it greedily down. He was not observant, but the ugly thought had somehow forced itself upon him that the man's exhaustion was that of sheer hunger as much as fatigue. It was almost in silence that he brought food from the adjacent pantry and set it on the table. Maynard ate eagerly, almost voraciously, and more than once turned to the brandy again. On a sudden the glass fell to the floor and smashed there as he sprang up, gripping the other's arm.

"There's someone coming. Listen—wheels and horses! Who is it?"

"Eh?" cried Thurston. He stared, bewildered; face and clutch astonished him equally. "Man alive, you're jumpier than a cat! Someone coming along from Green Springs, I reckon—sounds like it. Who should it be?"



"THERE'S SOMEONE COMING. LISTEN!"

"Look out! See, see!" cried Maynard.

Thurston stared again and went out upon the porch. Muffled in the thick dust of the road, the wheels and hoofs had been close before they were audible—a carriage was turning in at the gates. Everyone in the vicinity knew the superb team of prize-bred English chestnuts, and knew and liked their owner, Hamilton Trowbridge, the rich Englishman whose huge, smoking factories had made flourishing Green Springs out of nothing in particular but a river and a water-mill, and turned himself into a millionaire. He sprang down and advanced—a big, portly, handsome figure—it was his whim always to drive these special horses himself.

"So you are back, Mr. Thurston; I heard that you would be. Best congratulations," he said, cordially. "I have only a moment in passing, but I hope I may have the pleasure of paying my respects to your wife."

Thurston thanked him, explaining that his wife was away, and why. Mr. Trowbridge, listening in the pleasant fashion which had won him his popularity, mounted to his seat again.

"I shall hope to be more fortunate another time," he said. "Pray tell Mrs. Thurston so with my best congratulations and compliments. I am sorry to hear of Mrs. Hayter's illness, and that it should have occurred at so inopportune a time." He paused in gathering up the reins. "Oh, by the way, you haven't seen any doubtful characters knocking about, I suppose, eh?"

"Doubtful characters?" Thurston echoed. Mr. Trowbridge laughed.

"They're rather anxious to find one, down at the Bend," he said. "There was some sort of fuss last night in Bascombe's saloon, I understand—some fellow cheating at cards. He has been there for the last week, it seems, and cleared out pretty nearly everybody who was fool enough to sit down with him. But he wasn't dropped upon until yesterday, when some man, who had seen him at the same game in New York, recognised him. The tale is that he's a professional sharper, and has barely escaped lynching more than once already; anyhow, he had to run for it. I wouldn't answer for the consequences if some of those fellows of the Bend could get hold of him—I doubt if they would leave a sound limb on his body, if they did no worse. Someone told me that young Albert Crane, your housekeeper's son, had played with him. I hope that's not true—he's a nice lad, and has done well since he has been on the works. A relative of yours, I think?"

"No relation, Mr. Trowbridge. My father and his were a sort of partners one time."

"Ah, I knew there was some connection. Well, they haven't caught this fellow, so I suppose he has got clear off. Lucky for him! You've seen nobody?"

"No, sir."

"They say he's English," said Mr. Trowbridge. He nodded, turning the chestnuts' heads. As Thurston re-entered Maynard swung round from the fire.

"Who was it? Has he gone?"

"Yes, he's gone—it was Mr. Trowbridge. Did ye hear what he was telling me?" He laughed. "Say, old man, you don't look over and above spry yourself after the barn. Guess if he'd seen you he might have . . . Maynard! Man! My God!"

He fell back with the cry, white as a woman, meeting the other's wild eyes and face of shivering fear. The silence that followed might have been loud with question and answer, as each, motionless, looked at the other. Then Maynard, with a half-laugh, shrugged. Thurston moved at the sound; he flushed blood-red under his tan.

"Did ye cheat?" he demanded.

"Some men play better than others," said Maynard, coolly.

"Did ye cheat?" Thurston repeated.

"I won." Maynard laughed.

"Did ye cheat?" asked Thurston, as before.

"A man must live," said Maynard. Thurston moved a pace forward.

"You saved my life," he said, slowly. "And I reckon there isn't a man alive that's got more reason to be glad he is alive than I have. Five minutes ago you might have asked for 'most anything I've got and had it. Now, seems to me, there's only one thing I can do."

"You'll help me away out of this?" cried Maynard. "I knew you would when I recognised you out there. You're a brick, old fellow—by Jove, you are! It was the best of lucky chances that I came here!"

He held his hand out eagerly. Thurston fell back from it.

"No," he said, quietly. "You may be the sort of skunk you are, but I reckon I'm not that kind. I calculate that if I put you on board the cars at Cransett you'll be tolerable safe. I'll drive ye there after it's dark—there's a train to New York goes through pretty late. Have you got money?"

"Precious little! I had to leave it when I ran," said Maynard, half sullenly. "The fools would have torn me to pieces if they had got me, hang them!"

"Reckon they would," said Thurston, as before. "Well, when you're in New York I suppose you know pretty well where you can get more. That's not my business, anyway."

"Or your concern either, it seems!" said Maynard. He laughed, but there was a note of shame in the reckless bravado of it. "All right, old man; you're a good fellow, and I suppose I ought to thank you for not kicking me out straightway. I'm a bad lot—that's the truth—always was—there are some born so, I tell you. Such is life—don't be too conceited because it's your lucky fate to belong to the opposite faction. I'll smoke, by your leave." He had regained all his

jaunty nonchalance of manner as he threw himself into a chair. "By the way, I didn't know you were married."

"How did you know?" asked Thurston, bluntly.

"I heard your friend—confound him for the turn he gave me!—inquire after your wife. Never told you that I was, did I?"

"Married? No. I'm sorry to hear it," said Thurston, not less brusquely.

"Why, so am I. Or so was I, to be strictly correct. It doesn't make much difference now, that I know of," said Maynard, coolly. He sat up, feeling in an inner pocket. "I've got a portrait of her here, I think—don't know why I haven't pitched it away long ago. Here it is—have a look at it."

Thurston took the extended photograph, turned towards the door, and looked at it. Afterwards he always felt a dull wonder in remembering that he had not cried out. For in his own breast-pocket there lay the exact facsimile of this picture of Lily—Lily "in character," robed in white ungirdled artistic draperies, her pretty hair waving down about her shoulders, and clasping a great sheaf of lilies in her slender arms. Lily's portrait—Lily's self! He stood rigid, stone still, staring at it. From a distance immeasurable, through the crash of his rocking world, Maynard's voice penetrated.

"You weren't married a year ago, eh?"

"No."

"How long is it?"

"A week."

"No more? Where is your wife, then?"

"She's away."

"Ah, yes—I heard that! Sorry; I should have liked to see her."

"Ye won't see her!" The shaken earth was solid beneath his feet again—he turned. "Where's—yours?"

"The deuce knows," said Maynard, airily.

"Ye don't know?"

"No more than you do. Or than she knows where I am. She may be as dead as she fancies me, for all I can tell."

"You've let her think ye dead?"

"I've taken care that she should think it. We didn't hit it off over well, don't you see; when you've been married a year instead of a week you'll know that that's not phenomenal. My fault, I dare say. Anyhow, when I saw a chance of cutting the knot we were both about mutually tired of, I was precious glad to take it."

"You might—come across her," Thurston said, slowly.

"Eh? Not much fear of that—it's getting on for four years ago. And if she heard of me she'd be none the wiser. Maynard doesn't happen to be the name she knew me under."

"Which is your own?"

"Oh, the other, of course."

There was silence. Maynard smoked, not without swift furtive turns of head and eyes towards the open door, as some sound from without, real or fancied, struck upon his ear. Then Thurston moved. He made a stride to the hearth and flung the portrait into the heart of the fire; it blazed as he swung round upon the other. Maynard stared. "What's that for?"

"I guess it's the best place for it. You've no right to the woman you've deserted and lied to, and wouldn't have if you weren't the cheating skunk you are. That's gone. Look here—listen to me! You saved my life; I don't want to get away from it, because I reckon there's some it's of good to. If I put you aboard the cars and you get to New York you'll start the same game, and maybe end as you would have ended if the boys from the Bend had caught ye last night. I don't say I believe it, but I suppose there's a chance that, if you get back to England and your folks there, you might run less crooked, particularly if ye found some cash waiting when you got there. Anyhow, I'll give you the chance."

"You will!" Maynard sprang up.

"Yes; you shall have your passage, and five hundred dollars when you land. But you'll stop there, understand. Set your foot in this State again, and, by the Lord, I swear that some of those you've cheated shall catch ye. Is it a go?"

"Of course it's a go. And as for coming back again, you needn't be afraid of that, once I get clear off. There—there's too much risk."

"That's so," agreed Thurston, quietly. He relaxed his tense attitude with a deep breath. "We'd best not go before it's dark. I'll harness up the buggy then and drive to Cransett the way I said. I reckon I've money enough in the house for your passage; I'll see. You'd best go into that room there. Some of my folks may be back in a little; you can turn the key."

Maynard made a gesture of acquiescence and slipped through the indicated door; Thurston hurried out and up the stairs to the upper floor. He had barely disappeared when there was a sound of wheels outside, a pause followed by a rustle and rush in the porch, and Lily ran in. Her pretty hat was

all awry, her face pale, her whole aspect frightened and excited. For a moment she stood looking eagerly round the unfamiliar room, then called loudly.

"George!" she cried. "George! Where are you?"

There was no reply. For a moment she waited, listening, then ran towards the door leading to the entry.

"George!" she cried again. "Are you there, dear? Oh, come down—quickly—quickly!"

Thurston's voice had answered from above; she turned back, holding to the table edge; she was shaking from head to foot. As he hurried in she sprang to and clutched him; she had no eyes for his strained, haggard face or for the look he flung at the door behind her.

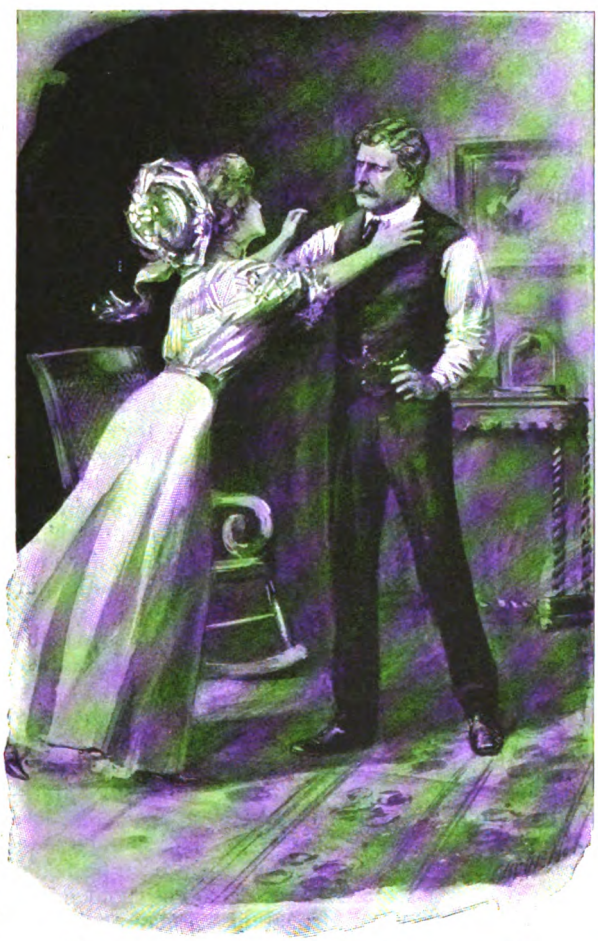
"Oh, George," she gasped, "such an awful thing! Luella didn't go away because she was ill—she isn't, although she's dreadfully upset. She went because she didn't want us to know and spoil our home-coming, she said. She wouldn't even tell Mr. Rogers what was really the matter. It's your housekeeper, poor Mrs. Crane—she's almost crazy. Her son has been murdered!"

"What?" cried Thurston.

His arm had been round her—fiercely round her—as he glared at that shut door; it dropped as he fell back. Lily saw nothing but natural horror in his face and his hoarse cry.

"He was shot in the forest by some horrible man who has been cheating at cards at a place they call the Bend. Somebody accused him of it last night, and he had to run or they would have lynched him, Luella said. No one else caught him, but young Crane must have done—he'd lost a lot of money. He was found shot through the heart. The sheriff and his officers are searching the forest, somebody told Mr. Rogers, but they are afraid the man will have got away. Oh, I can't tell you!"

She burst into hysterical sobbing. Thurston opened a door and drew her through. A passage led into the large, airy chamber, all pink and white and dainty, which had been specially furnished for her. He did not look round it or look at her as he placed her in the big cushioned rocking-chair.



"'OH, GEORGE,' SHE GASPED, 'SUCH AN AWFUL THING!'"

"You don't need to say any more, dear. I reckon I understand pretty well—I've heard something of this while you've been gone—about the cheating upat the Bend, I mean. Did Luella make you eat anything? Yes? Then you'd best lie down and try to rest a little."

"I—I—don't believe I can," Lily half sobbed. "Where's Rosy?"

"She's asleep," said Thurston.

He went back to the kitchen, throwing open the shut door. Maynard, emerging quickly, started back as he saw his face—his own turned sickly white. For a moment the two stood and looked at each other.

"You murderer!" said Thurston.

Maynard gave a gasp; otherwise he was mute. Thurston moved a step.

"You murderer!" he repeated. "It

wasn't enough to rob and fleece the boy; you must shoot him down in cold blood to finish. I've heard—I know ye did it. You villain!"

"No, no!" Maynard cried, hoarsely. "Thurston, I didn't mean killing—I swear I didn't! But the boy tracked and overtook me—it was shoot or be taken." His shaking hand gripped the other's sleeve. "Old man, I saved your life—give me a chance of mine! Get me away!"

"You villain!" Thurston repeated. "Let them catch and hang ye, as you deserve. There's your way!"

He pointed to the door. Almost reeling from the force with which he had been thrown off, Maynard caught at a chair, steadying himself. For a moment he stood so, breathing quickly. Then he laughed.

"You'll give me up, will you?" he said, deliberately. "There are those who might consider that rather ungrateful, my friend. Suppose we ask one of them for her opinion. Suppose we ask—my wife?"

Thurston staggered back as though the words had been a blow; he had a ghastly face.

"I saw her when she came in and recognised her as quickly as you did her portrait," said Maynard.

"She's mine!" said Thurston, fiercely. He made a stride before the door leading to Lily's room. "Stand off, or I shall do ye a mischief! I say she's mine!"

"Yours and welcome as far as I'm concerned, but the law would not say so," Maynard retorted. "Do I call her, or —— Ah! Listen! Heavens!—they're coming! They're after me!"

He sprang to the door. Deadened though they were by the muffling dust, the sounds of approaching hoofs were plainly audible. Livid, he turned back again.

"They're coming! They've tracked me! If you give me up——" He stamped fiercely. "By Heaven, if I'm taken it shall be before her eyes! Get me away to Cransett and out of this cursed country—swear you'll do it, or I call to her! She'll know my voice. Let her hear it, and you'll murder her as well as me!"

He was at the door. Thurston swung him away, pointed to the second door, and hurried out upon the porch just in time—a couple of mounted men, constables from Basset, were riding into the yard. The one in advance called to him.

"S'pose you guess what we're after, Mr. Thurston—the man that shot young Albert Crane? You haven't seen him, I reckon?"

"No," said Thurston.

"Don't happen to have noticed anyone sort of skulking around anywhere?"

"No," said Thurston.

"Didn't much calculate you would, or anyone else, for that matter," interposed the other. "He's hid up in the forest, or I miss my guess, and won't be got out till he's starved out. That won't be long, though, for the sheriff's put a guard on all the ways that lead anywhere, and on the roads to Leadville and Green Springs. He won't be likely to make for Basset, it's too near the Bend, and we've wired on from Cross Corners to watch the cars at Cransett. If he didn't make tracks right away we shall have him, sure."

The two rode on. As Thurston turned back into the room Maynard caught his arm.

"Cransett!" he gasped. "They are watching the station there? I shall be trapped, then."

"If I drive you there—yes; but I won't," said Thurston, rapidly. "There's a train goes through Palmersville, three miles below Basset, at ten o'clock; they won't be on guard there. It stops at Neston, and you can take another on to New York that don't touch Cransett. It's touch and go, but ye may get through. Give me your shooter. Quick!"

"The—my revolver—why?" Maynard stammered, drawing back.

"Give it me!" Thurston repeated. He made a gesture of impatience. "You fool!" he said, roughly. "Don't you see that if there's a hitch, if you don't get clear off, it will damn you as nothing else would? Give it me!"

Maynard drew out the revolver. Thurston took it, pulled open the door of a bureau, and threw it in.

"We'd best not wait for dark. It's two hours, good, to Palmersville, the way I shall go—the main road's too risky. I'll hitch up the buggy now, and——"

He stopped; Maynard had given a cry. Without a sound the door into the sitting-room had been pushed open, and Rosy stood there. The golden head was all rumpled from the pillow; the chubby fist was rubbing the drowsy blue eyes; the little cherub face was pink with the flush of sleep. For a moment she stood so, staring at the two, then ran across and clung to Thurston's hand.

"Dadda!" she cried, joyfully.

Thurston stood still. Maynard's eyes went bewilderedly from the child to the door lead-

ing to Lily's room and back again. He moved a pace waveringly, as though he were uncertain of his feet.

"You told me you had been married a week," he said, hoarsely. "Only a week! Then—why—how——"

The formless question trailed into nothing. Thurston was silent. With his wordless gasp of comprehension Maynard drew back. His manner and his voice were on a sudden singularly quiet.

"I suppose," he said, slowly, "you meant her to think that you were really her father?"

"Yes," Thurston answered, bluntly. "Yes—I did mean her to think it. She should never have known any different."

"She should never have known any different," Maynard repeated, slowly. "Why, I suppose you wouldn't exactly have objected if, in course of time, she had been called by your name, eh?"

"I hoped she would be."

"You hoped she would be," Maynard repeated, as before. "Yes. And Thurston has been a name without a word against it for a generation or two, I suppose? It's a good record!" He looked at the child as she stood rubbing her cheek against the hand her chubby fingers clasped. "You're rather fond of dadda, aren't you, little one?"

"Ess," declared Rosy, with a nod. "Loves him 'cause mummie does," she asseverated, glancing up at Thurston wistfully.

"Ah!" said Maynard.

He beckoned to her. Regarding him half askance over a shrugged, defensive shoulder, she sidled across. He lifted her in his arms, held her for a moment, kissed her, and set her down again.

"You had best take her to her mother, Thurston. And don't trouble about harnessing the buggy. I think I can find a way out."

He spoke with a curious gentleness. Thurston paused in stooping to lift the child.

"Out of the forest?" he demanded.

"Yes, out of the forest," said Maynard, as before. "It is strange how one may sometimes overlook the obvious; I shall find it quite easily."

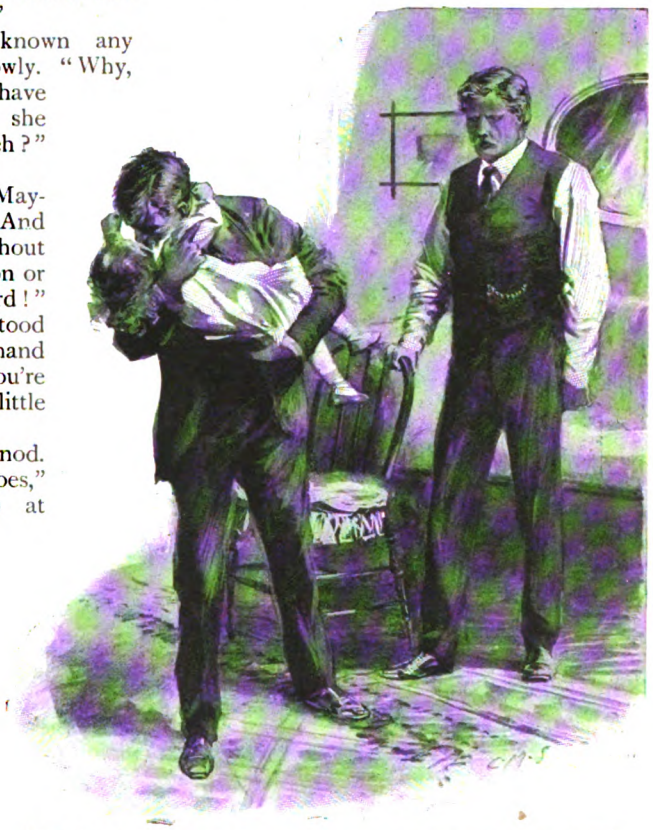
"Guess you'll be more likely to run clean into the sheriff's arms," said Thurston, bluntly. "You heard what they said; they're guarding all the ways out."

"Not the one I'm thinking of," said Maynard, smiling.

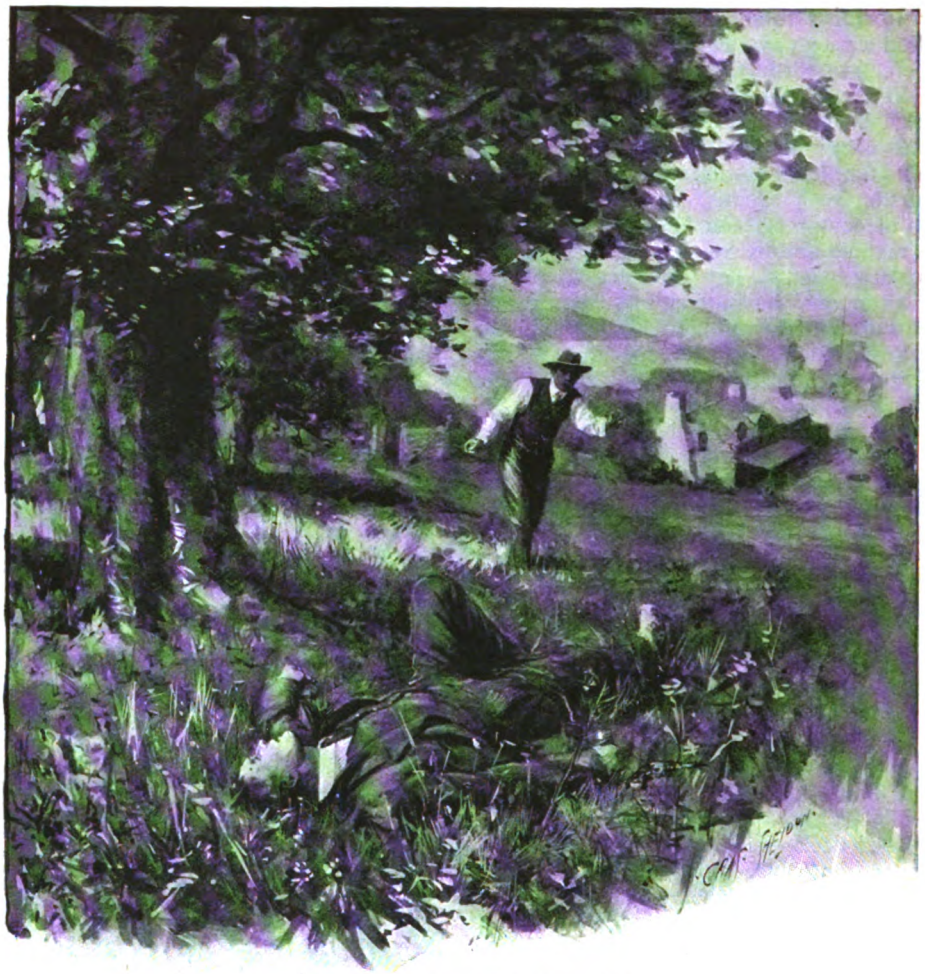
Thurston took up the child and carried her into the inner room. Lily stood by the white-frilled, lace-decked dressing-table; she had slipped off her muslin and pulled down her hair; the thick waves fell brown and shining over her face and her round, bare arms. She spoke as she brushed, not looking at him.

"I couldn't lie down—I keep thinking of that poor woman—and I was so untidy," she said, apologetically. "I couldn't come and have my first home supper with you, looking such a dusty wreck, dear. You would think you had a shocking slattern of a wife. Oh, that little puss is awake. Come here to mummie, Rosy darling, and be made respectable too. I won't be many minutes, George."

Thurston muttered something—he could not look at her. He put the child down and went out. In the passage-way a sudden fit of



"HE LIFTED HER IN HIS ARMS, KISSED HER, AND SET HER DOWN AGAIN."



"UNDER A GREAT TREE HE FOUND IT."

nausea and giddiness seized him; the big fellow reeled like a sick woman against the wall; he felt choking and weak. It was a minute before the paroxysm passed and he went on to the kitchen. Entering, he stared round an empty room—Maynard was gone. He hurried out upon the porch and stood listening, peering across the road into the heavy shadows of the forest. The soft, warm hush of the coming night was absolutely still. But in a moment the silence was broken by a sound like the sharp tap of a hammer.

Thurston sprang back into the room with a cry. He rushed to the bureau and tore it open—the revolver was gone! As, with a second cry, he turned again to the door, Lily ran in.

"What is it, George? Did you call out? What's the matter?"

He put her aside and rushed out.

Motionless in bewilderment for a moment, the next she ran after him to the door.

"George, what is it? What's the matter?" she cried again.

But Thurston did not hear or answer. He was searching for the reason why the hammer had tapped. Presently, some fifty paces from the forest's edge, and under a great tree, he found it. Maynard lay with his face upturned; the revolver had fallen from his lax hand; upon his forehead the way he had found showed round and blackened, and very small.

Crime in the Post Office.

By Austin Philips.

EVERY phase of social evolution has brought with it a parasite. Before the introduction of coins there were no makers of base money; before the time of bank-notes forgers were not. Even the submarine cable gave the ocean a new inhabitant of predatory instincts which fed upon its parent. So with each successive postal development has come, from within the Post Office itself, a fresh criminal to prey upon the extension which gives him his means of existence. The sorting office, the savings bank, the postal order, and the registered letter, all have been attacked; assuredly the telephone will carry its own peculiar crime.

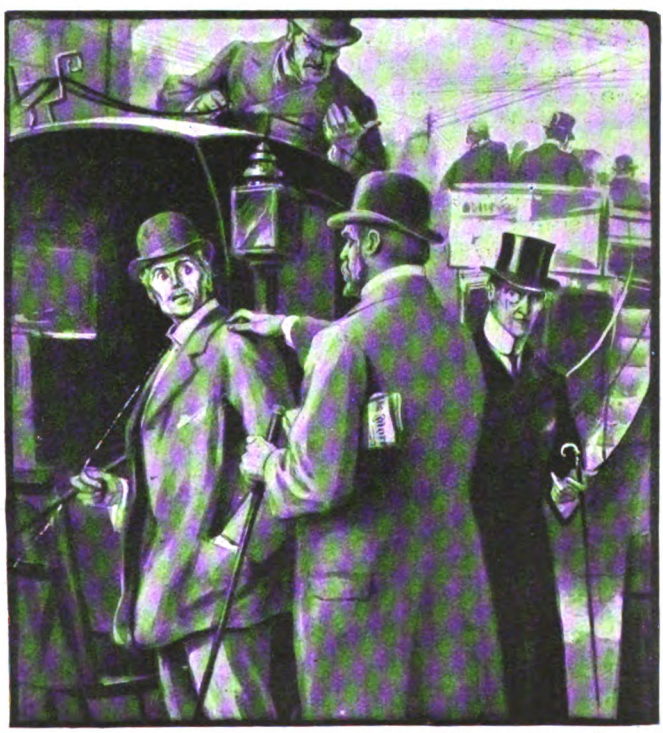
But since the Post Office is a live and healthy institution, full of resisting power, it has been capable of producing a stronger thing than the parasites which it could not wholly check. With the introduction of the penny letter and the advent of the inside criminal with limitless opportunities, the almost unknown, but terribly efficient, department called the Confidential Inquiry Branch came into being.

And the eldest child of the Confidential Inquiry Branch is the test letter.

There is a prevalent belief, common even in the service itself, especially in provincial offices, that strange, hawk-eyed men from head-quarters periodically sow tempting-looking packets broadcast among the staff, and that, by this means, honest men are made into criminals and punished to encourage the others to remain virtuous. Not at all. No test letter is ever sent at haphazard.

So perfect is the machinery at head-quarters that if, at any office in the United Kingdom, letters are going astray, it is possible, by means of system, built up and perfected through years of practical experience, for an investigating officer to put his finger on the pulse of the mischief and, sooner or later, to bring the offender to book.

And this is the more wonderful when it is remembered that at some offices the staff is numbered in hundreds and that millions of letters are dealt with in the year. A thief, however raw and inexperienced, seldom steals letters which he himself should deliver or sort. He takes, rather, such as come to him missorted or out of course, in such a way as to leave him, as he believes, utterly unidentified with the theft. But some day or other a missorted letter comes into his hands, just as dozens of other missorted letters have come, and presently, when he has opened it and has put the contents in his pocket, he is stopped in the street or in the office by a plain-clothes detective. Then he is taken to the post-



"HE IS STOPPED IN THE STREET BY A PLAIN-CLOTHES DETECTIVE."

master's room, where he is asked inconvenient questions by a strange gentleman, to whom, in the majority of cases, he is only too glad to make a clean breast of the matter from beginning to end.

And out of his pockets—for he seldom puts all the spoil into one pocket—come the marked coins or postal orders that the innocent-looking test letter held.

On one occasion a postman, whose honesty was tested in this way, stoutly denied his guilt and protested that he had never even seen the letter about which he was being questioned. Indeed, he even went so far as to insist upon being searched for the coins which the test letter had contained. And, up to a point, his protestations of innocence seemed justified. But, unfortunately for him, he had a pocket-book in his tunic, and in the pocket-book was a penny stamp which still adhered to a piece of brown paper. The investigating officer said nothing, but just took a little bottle of fluid and dabbed the damp top of the glass stopper on the stamp. And then the postman lost some of his confidence.

For on the stamp were certain green letters, growing more and more plain as the chemical ate into the paper. They were the investigating officer's own initials, which he had put on the postage-stamp that morning before he put it on the test letter.

At the trial the postman pleaded "Not guilty," but was convicted on the evidence of the postage-stamp alone. And before sentence was passed he admitted that he had stolen the test letter, and that he had parted with the coins to a tobacconist at whose shop he delivered.

A good many years ago letters were going astray at a little town in Essex. The local postmaster was a pompous person, with an abnormal belief in his own detective abilities. He was positive, he said, that a certain young sorter, who had given him trouble in other ways, was the thief. The investigating officer had his doubts, but he was obliged to give some weight to the views of the man on the spot. So test letter after test letter was put into the lad's way till the investigating officer was certain of his honesty. Yet the losses went on!

Then something came to light which changed the whole current of the case. The postmaster had a son who was living extravagantly and was drinking more than he ought. He, too, was a sorter. What was the investigating officer to do? Could he trust the postmaster? No! Yet he could not test the son's honesty without the father's help while the father was there.

The investigating officer sat down and wrote a letter. In it he hinted that he wanted to make a very confidential communication, and asked the postmaster to meet him at ten o'clock next day on Clacton Sands, some ten miles away. But when the next day came he did not go to Clacton Sands to keep the appointment, but went to the town where the losses were taking place. There, in the absence of the postmaster, he saw the second-in-command and took him into confidence and tested the postmaster's son. As he had expected, he caught him.

When the unfortunate postmaster came back from his outing, hot and cross and disappointed, his son was in prison and the investigating officer had gone back to London.

The most extensive Post Office frauds—extensive, that is, from a financial standpoint—have been those directed against the savings bank.

In one instance the country suffered to the extent of some fifteen hundred pounds by the defalcations of a sub-postmaster in an insignificant and remote village. Owing to the misplaced confidence which he enjoyed, his fellow-villagers played into his hands. Many of them had the fear, common to country-folk, that their savings-bank books were unsafe in their own possession, and he encouraged them to leave such books with him for, he pretended, their better safeguarding. He was careful to select very aged, illiterate, or notably thrifty depositors for this purpose, and he was thus enabled practically to control the sums which stood to their credit. If persons of advanced years, already the possessors of substantial balances, brought him sums to be deposited, he would assure them that no receipt was necessary, since he had their books in safe keeping. He would then omit to credit them with the amount of the deposit, and, failing to bring it to account at all, would quite comfortably convert it to his own use.

Another of his methods was to forge notices of withdrawal from the accounts of his trusting friends, and in this way to withdraw large sums for himself. As he only manipulated carefully-selected accounts and was held in high esteem on all hands, it was some time before his depredations were discovered. Even when exhaustive investigation had been made it was difficult to find any of the defrauded persons who were willing to give evidence against him. But this difficulty

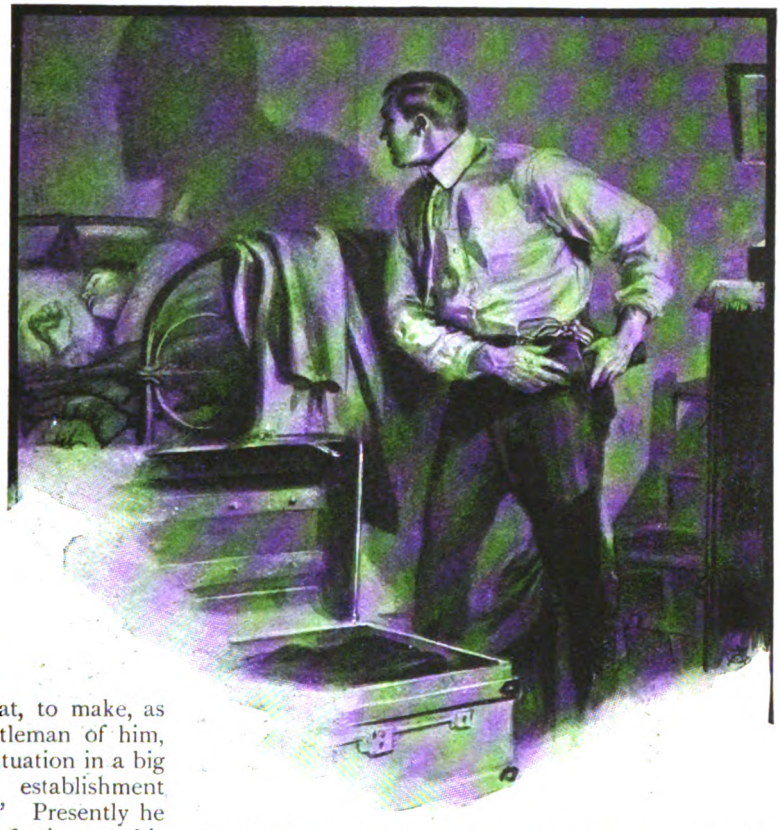
was successfully overcome, and he was sentenced to a heavy term of imprisonment.

The introduction of the system of "withdrawal on demand" was responsible for an avalanche of frauds, though they were necessarily limited in result, since, by the regulations, not more than a pound can be withdrawn at any one time. One ingenious gentleman opened a number of accounts by depositing a shilling at various offices in different names. Having thus obtained a number of deposit books, he set about altering the entries to larger amounts, and then proceeded to withdraw a pound where he had deposited a shilling. His career was not, however, a lengthy one.

The telegram has played a considerable part in frauds upon the savings bank, and the following is an illustration of the method commonly pursued. Two old peasants in the West of England had scraped together enough money to put their son into a black coat, to make, as they thought, a gentleman of him, and to get him a situation in a big London drapery establishment where he "lived in." Presently he failed to give satisfaction to his employers and was discharged. He was without a character and penniless.

One of his fellow-assistants, who also "lived in," took compassion upon him, and let him share his bed until he could get a job. But the other repaid the kindness by stealing his friend's bank-book from a tin box in the cubicle, and withdrew by telegram a sum of money sufficient to take him back to the West. But before he went he replaced the book and said good-bye, and asserted that he had received a remittance from home.

A month later the good Samaritan wanted to take out some of his savings. When he came to look at his book he found that a withdrawal had recently been made by some person other than himself. That it had been the man he had helped never occurred to him; but when inquiry was set on foot it became clear that the discharged brother-assistant was the culprit. He was arrested and brought to London, where he made a full confession of his guilt. The case was not pressed against him—the Post Office is never vindictive in its prosecutions—and he was merely bound over to come up for judgment when called upon to do so.



"STEALING HIS FRIEND'S BANK-BOOK FROM A TIN BOX IN THE CUBICLE."

The introduction of the postal order was responsible for an enormous increase as regards thefts by persons employed in the department itself. A very common form of Post Office crime is the stealing of letters containing postal orders, and the subsequent negotiation of the latter in fictitious names. But some criminals, being too wary to put their own handwriting, although disguised, on the orders, employ women to do it for them, though it is very rare indeed for them to get persons in their own family to do this.

But in one instance a postman actually made a practice of handing the stolen orders to his mother to negotiate.

As always happens, the Confidential Inquiry Branch got wind of the facts. The mother was watched. One evening she was seen to go into a post-office in the East-end and to tender a postal order for payment in an assumed name. She was considerably taken aback when a polite person of many inches introduced himself as a detective and requested the pleasure of her company as far as St. Martin's-le-Grand. There, later on, her son unwillingly joined her. By way of defence he made the astounding statement that his mother must have got the postal orders from letters which he had left in his tunic pocket, having forgotten to deliver them. But, ultimately, he admitted his guilt. With its usual magnanimity the department declined to prosecute the woman.

Again the postal order was attacked; this time so effectively as to bring about a radical change in its formation, as the only safeguard against a repetition of the crime.

An inventive genius discovered that a postal order for a shilling could quite easily be converted into one for eleven shillings by the addition of a stencilled numeral in the right-hand top corner and the complete covering of the words "one shilling" by a row of postage-stamps. This gentleman earned a pleasant, if brief, livelihood by travelling about the provinces disposing of new orders for old. But he was caught in a week or two's time, and since then all postal orders up to ten shillings have been printed in blue ink, and all above that denomination in red. Proper spaces for stamps have also been ordained at the foot of the orders, so that the crime is no longer possible. But while it lasted the inventor made a very decent thing of his scheme.

A daring robbery, upon a very extensive scale, was carried out some years ago by two officers of a Transatlantic liner, who plundered the mail-bags while in the ship's hold. The ringleader was the first officer, who had charge of the mails, and the accomplice held the rank of fourth officer. They secured a great quantity of spoil in diamonds and bank-notes. The accomplice, a mere cat's-paw, was arrested while tendering one of the notes at a bank in New Jersey, and there made a statement which incriminated the first officer. They were both extradited. The cat's-paw pleaded "Guilty"; the instigator denied his guilt throughout the police-court proceedings

"THEY SECURED A GREAT QUANTITY OF SPOIL IN DIAMONDS AND BANK-NOTES."

and up to the day of his trial, when he withdrew the plea for one of "Guilty."

This was probably the most expensive Post Office case on record. The witnesses numbered quite seventy, and included several from America and Belgium. A few months after the release of the principal criminal he was sent to prison again for the attempted scuttling of a ship on the high seas.

Expert Continental thieves have not greatly troubled the Post Office, but in the eighties a registered letter-bag was extracted from its covering sack at some point between London and Berlin. There was every indication that a well-known gang had been responsible for the theft, but there was no actual evidence against them.

A day or so after the robbery a man presented some bank-notes at a money-changer's in the neighbourhood of the Strand. The proprietor made some excuse for detaining his client, slipped out at the back entrance, and returned with a policeman. The notes presented for payment were some which the money-changer himself had enclosed in a registered letter, and this had formed part of the contents of the stolen bag! The presenter of the notes was tried and convicted.

But the gravest of all crimes committed against the Post Office was the murder of the caretaker at Birkenhead on Sunday, the 9th September, 1900.

The post office at Birkenhead stood in a somewhat isolated position in the centre of a large square. One side of it adjoined another building; the other side looked on to waste ground, and was at some distance from any other house. On Sundays work ceased from about ten in the morning until five in the afternoon, and the office was left in charge of a caretaker, who had no particular duty to perform beyond that of remaining in the building and keeping the doors locked against the outside world.

When, towards five o'clock, the sorters came on duty they found the swing doors of the sorting-office slightly open and pools of blood on the floor. Going up the office they saw blood on the sorting-boards, and in front of them more blood. The half-wood, half-wire front of the registered letter enclosure was twisted and bent. There were signs of a struggle before its door and the marks of feet which had clambered up to and over its top, which was only some six feet high and did not go up to the ceiling. Looking through the wire netting they saw the safe door open and the floor of the enclosure littered with torn papers and envelopes. And, certain of the worst, they began to look for the caretaker, hoping against fear.

A door led from the sorting-office into the back of the counter; the handle was wet as they turned it and went in. The counter-flap, which gave passage from the official side to the public side of the counter, was thrown back and splintered. Signs of a struggle were most apparent here. On the great yellow blind of one of the windows which gave on to the main street were finger-marks, red and plain. But there was no sign of the caretaker.

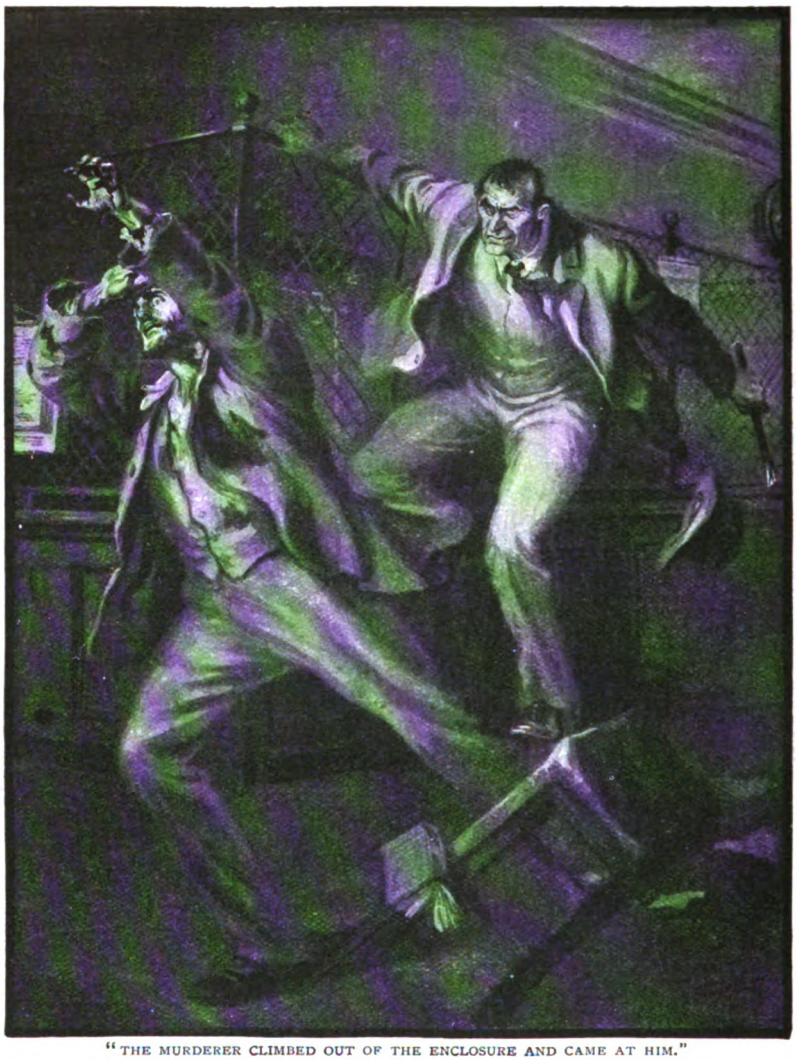
The seekers went back into the sorting-office. Another room opened out of it—the postmaster's room. And, going in, they found the missing man. He was lying on the hearthrug with a green registered letter-bag over his face, which was hammered into an unrecognisable mass. Beside him lay an iron rod, used for opening parcel baskets. The presses and papers in the pigeon-holes on the walls were covered with splashed blood.

The crime was simple to reconstruct.

The caretaker's tea lay brewed, and his food untasted, on a sorting-board; clearly he had been disturbed just before his mid-day meal, which he was known to take at noon. Someone had clamoured at the swing doors. He had opened them, ever so little, and had been felled with a knuckle-duster worn on a powerful hand. It was easy to see that he had lain unconscious for awhile. Then, as he came to, the insistent grating sound of the drill eating its way into the safe made itself understood. He got up from the saturated sack on which he had been lying and groped his difficult way towards the registered letter enclosure. His fingers gripped the sorting-tables for aid as he went. Outside the enclosure he stopped and calculated the chances. The thief, hard at work, had not heard him. So he made a rush through the door which led into the counter, that he might beat upon the windows and call for help. Then the creak and crack of the woodwork as the murderer climbed out of the enclosure and came at him; the struggle to the window, where the poor hands touched the blind and no more; the weakening victim dragged back to the sorting-office and finished in the postmaster's room, where he struggled still.

And then—for who knows what sense of decency came to him in that hour?—the coarse green bag laid over the murdered man's face by his slayer.

The murderer went to a little lavatory



"THE MURDERER CLIMBED OUT OF THE ENCLOSURE AND CAME AT HIM."

upstairs and washed his hands, and passed boldly out through the swing doors into the sunshine. He took with him a hundred and twenty pounds—mostly in bank-notes. And he was never caught. There are many theories as to his identity, but, since he may yet be apprehended, it is well to leave them unaired. One thing at least may be said. It was no Post Office servant who did this thing, but an expert and hardened criminal.

The Birkenhead case is, perhaps, the only great unsolved Post Office crime; and it does not in any way reflect upon the efficiency of the department's expert branch. The local police took over the case from its inception, and the whole conduct of it lay with them. The Post Office gave only such help as it could. This was a case apart from all others.

Because the Post Office has its parasites, it must not be thought that the bulk of its servants are dishonest. On the contrary, having regard to their opportunities and temptations, the standard of honesty is exceptionally high, the percentage of crime incredibly low. This is mainly due to the traditions of the service, and to the care which is exercised in the selection of persons employed. But, too, the much-maligned Confidential Inquiry Branch is splendidly efficient—and efficiency tells.

The whole history of "inside" Post Office crime is a triumph for departmental methods. It may be said with absolute certainty that no one can carry on a campaign against them without defeat—that no criminal, however astute, can in the long run go undetected.

OF all the composers whose works are familiar to lovers of music not one is so generally popular or so widely appreciated as Chopin. Yet it is safe to say that the works of no other composer are, year in year out, so religiously—or, I should rather say, sacrilegiously—and horribly murdered by the amateur and the mediocre pianist. This is primarily because Chopin is played more than any other composer by the amateur and the mediocre pianist. The works of any other composer suffer just the same proportionately at the same hands!

But yet, what would you have? Musical insight, with the true appreciation of all the beautiful feelings and emotions expressed upon the piano, is a possession of which few can boast in an active sense, although many possess it passively. With proper musical training it can be acquired to some extent, it is true, but real genius in this respect is God-given at birth; it is as a tiny speck of yeast, which grows and expands with the mind until the whole soul of the artiste is leavened. The passive appreciation, as I have already said, is a different matter. If one walks through an exquisite garden, full of rare and beautiful flowers, one cannot but admire and appreciate the work of the gardener. The arrangement of the beds, the size and perfect symmetry of the various blossoms, the strange and beautiful colours which surround one would be attractive to anyone, even though they had never been in a garden before. But what proportion of those walking through such a garden could as successfully perform the gardener's task?

FREDERICK CHOPIN.

Thousands of people visit the Royal Academy each year. All can admire the paintings exhibited there. To some there are certain pictures more pleasing than others, but all will find beauties to appreciate, however individual his or her taste

may be. Yet how many of those who see and admire them could paint any picture or depict upon canvas any one of the particular effects that appeal to their sense of the beautiful?

Music is both a garden and a picture gallery, and great artistes are the gardeners and the painters. The beauties of a garden appeal spontaneously to everyone alike. The sweet simplicity of the daisy, the brilliance of the sunflower, the elegance of the lily, and the fragrance of the rose are appreciated at sight by both the uncultured and the cultured mind. The very savage knows how beautiful is Nature's work, although he cannot imitate it, however hard he may try. It is to the cultured mind, therefore, that my simile of the picture gallery is directed. For discrimination as to the comparative beauty of pictures, special education is essential. Yet even where this special education exists, it does not say that those who possess it would be able to paint the pictures they admire and criticise.

The beauties of music, when properly brought out, appeal just as spontaneously as the beauties of a garden. The uncultured mind appreciates them immediately and indiscriminately, the cultured mind appreciates them spontaneously and discriminately, yet the productive ability in both cases may be equally lacking. Thus it is that Chopin suffers at the hands of the thousands of pianists who attempt to play him, for, while they can appreciate his beauties when they are shown to them by others, they do not possess the ability to bring them out themselves. Indeed, Chopin is one of the most difficult composers to play well, and the artiste who attempts him must have a heart by nature, a brain by study, and technique by constant practice. His works contain countless beauties, but these must be read not only upon the music but between the lines, for to properly interpret the poetry and emotionalism of the composer it is necessary to mentally create the same atmosphere as that in which he lived and moved and had his being. For Chopin came into existence at a time of great political restlessness among his countrymen the Poles, and the surrounding influences of his time were reflected to an extraordinary extent in all his works. The very variety of his compositions speaks of his birth, for the characteristics of the Pole are a strange intermingling of gaiety and sadness, and sudden changes from triumph to dejection, caused by his utter inability to hold up his head in face of opposing circumstance. Thus Chopin's music was impregnated with subtle romance, exuberant fancy, inconsequent gaiety, triumphant grandeur, and utter disconsolateness. In more than one of his compositions these various moods succeed one another in quick succession, until the music reflects, like a mirror, the emotions that stirred the composer's soul. Review, for a moment, the B Flat Minor Sonata with the Funeral March. As the piece progresses mood succeeds mood in the composer's mind. The light-heartedness of youth, the romance of love, the triumph of manhood, the lust of battle, the intoxication of success, the anguish of defeat, the bitterness of death, and the mournful passing of the spirit follow one another with dramatic swiftness. Each successive mood

VLADIMIR DE PACHMANN.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

of the composer must receive its own special interpretation at the hands of the pianist, yet the whole piece must present the ensemble of a finished picture.

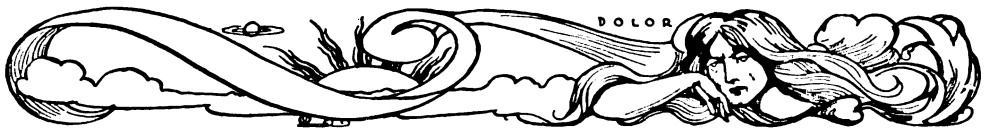
To make a beautiful thing ugly is a very easy matter indeed, and in this respect most pianists who attempt Chopin are eminently successful. But to make an ugly thing beautiful is the most difficult of tasks. Yet it is a task that even Chopin occasionally demands. It is not to be supposed that all the work of any great man could possibly be of the same high standard, and Chopin is no exception to the rule. About one-third of his compositions are comparatively poor, and are, in consequence, not played at concerts. Personally, for public performance I pick out from his works only the gems, for the public will and must have the best of music as of everything else. For amateurs, however, there is no need to pick out and study special pieces in the same way. They have no large public to please, and their task is therefore an easier one, since, instead of being obliged to play what other people want, they need only interpret those pieces specially fitted to their own temperament.

This leads me to a point which I would specially urge upon all who play the piano, independently of whether they play Chopin or any other composer. Each should early discover which particular works appeal most readily to his or her temperament. These should then be carefully studied and mastered one by one. Each piece that is thoroughly understood will open up some new avenue of thought which will in turn make possible the interpretation of some fresh and more complicated work.

No piece can be mastered very quickly. Often it is a matter of years before one fully appreciates all the meaning and beauty of a passage. For my part, constant playing of Chopin's works has made them so much part of myself that I see and appreciate many different aspects of beauty in them. Yet even now I am constantly finding fresh points of view with different meanings and new beauties.

Chopin-playing requires, above all else, an education amongst the works of other composers, not only because familiarity with other composers educates the musical understanding and cultivates a variety of temperament, but for technical reasons. The compositions of other composers may in some cases be more uniformly difficult than Chopin technically, but the works of no other composer combine such a variety of technical difficulties in individual pieces. To play Chopin, therefore, one must have thoroughly mastered all the means that every composer makes use of to obtain effect. And on top of the variety of technique required comes the special study of the true Chopin *pianissimo*. Of so delicate a nature are some of Chopin's passages that to do them full justice, and to bring out all their beauties, careful and special study must be made of *pianissimo* effects. This is no easy matter, and can only be acquired by constant effort and practice, but it is absolutely indispensable for the renderings of the works of this master.

Another small technical point which the amateur must master is the ability to accentuate some particular note in a chord. It often happens that Chopin's melody — the melody that lends meaning to the whole piece—lies in the top notes in a series of chords. If all the notes of those chords are played with an equal accent the melody is lost and the whole meaning of the passage destroyed. The melody, therefore, must be accentuated and brought out, while the other notes of the chord must be heard like an accompaniment. This is particularly beautiful in soft passages where the melody notes are themselves played *pianissimo*. The rest of the chord is so lightly struck as to resemble, more than anything else, the sighing of a breeze over the strings, so that they are only just stirred into sound. Often the same passage of chords is repeated several times in a given piece. Such passages should never be rendered in exactly the same way each time. The difference may be simply a matter of tone, but an even more striking effect may be sometimes obtained by neglecting the original melody and accentuating the second note of the chords, which will thus sound like an alto echo to a treble voice. Such effects as these are arrived at by careful thought and study, but they often transform passages that



would otherwise be comparatively uninteresting into bars of great beauty and attractiveness. Chopin's 20th Prelude is one in which these effects can be produced in many different ways.

The whole question of melody is of the utmost importance where Chopin is concerned, for many of his most beautiful pieces resemble songs which, alas! too often lose their beauty at the hands of second-rate pianists, through the voice being drowned by the accompaniment. Infinite delicacy and elegance are required for the playing of these songs on the piano, and much may be done to ensure perfection by listening to great singers, observing how they obtain their effects, and adapting their methods to the piano.

For me, Chopin's great attractiveness lies in the fact that practically every piece he ever wrote tells a complete story in itself, or paints some picture easily comprehensible to the mind educated in music, and often quite intelligible, when interpreted by a great artiste, even to a mind uneducated in music, or comparatively so. The great Chopin-player is the man who not only sees the pictures that Chopin conjures up, but can show them to his audiences in such a way that they can see them too.

The necessary technique for playing Chopin could never be acquired by reading anything that I or another might write on the subject, but it is possible in an article like this to draw attention to noteworthy points in connection with specific pieces, and with this end in view I will run through a few of Chopin's works that are most familiar to amateurs.

The mazurkas I will dismiss in a few words. In them Chopin displays some of his most changeable moods. When playing them one seems to be dancing with, so to speak, the tears in one's eyes all the time, for there is often an underlying note of sadness throughout the theme. Occasionally they break off into utter gaiety and wild, inconsequent joy. Sadness and joy are, indeed, strangely mixed up in them.

The preludes are always popular both with players and with audiences, and this is not surprising, for, with the exception of one or two weak ones, they are all of them exceptionally beautiful, interesting, and characteristic. The first of them is in a style that reminds one very forcibly of Schumann. To play it is very refreshing, like a draught of cool spring water on a hot day, but the second is, I think, somewhat poor, and I remember that Liszt himself once told me he thought it a little weak. The third, though it has not a very high meaning, is a delightful little prelude. The melody is so smooth that it reminds me of oil floating upon water, while a sort of zither accompaniment is running. The fourth, though more poetical than the second, would have been more attractive if written in the shape of a song for a lady's voice accompanied by a little harmonium. The fifth is one that is so difficult to properly interpret that one of the great pianists of the day once stated that he studied it for years before he ventured to play it in public. No. 6 could very well be played by a 'cello and violin, but it is possible on the piano to get more effect than could be got with the 'cello itself. A little curiosity is to be found in this prelude at the end of the fifth bar from the finish, when there comes a sort of trumpet call announcing the conclusion. The seventh is gay, the eighth an exercise, the ninth makes me think of returning after a funeral, and in the tenth Chopin seems to me to point at and imitate his master, Hummel.

No. 11 is a fine prelude. There is melody all the time, and at this point in the preludes we begin to get genuine Chopinism. But it should not be played *vivace!* It should be *allegro moderato.* Liszt thought this prelude was nonsense if played *vivace.* In the 12th Prelude, again, there is a mistake very commonly made as to the manner of its playing. Besides being a great *tour de force*, this prelude is also exceedingly poetical. Now, if it is played *presto*, all the beautiful poetical meaning is lost, and it becomes a *tour de force* only. If it is played *poco presto*, however, not only does it remain a *tour de force*, but all the poetry in it can be brought out.

I do not like the 13th Prelude. The 14th is all fun from beginning to end—a regular volcano of gaiety! The 15th is my favourite. It is the longest of the preludes, and reminds

one of an impromptu. The 16th is my great favourite! It is *la plus grande tour de force* in Chopin. It is the most difficult of all the preludes technically, possibly excepting the 19th. In this case *presto* is not enough. It should be played *prestissimo*, or, better still, *vivacissimo*. No. 17 was the favourite of Mme. Schumann and Rubinstein. It is very majestic, and in it Chopin introduces harmonies not previously found in other composers. The 18th is really a cadenza. In it Chopin never repeats himself. From beginning to end it is brilliant and interesting. No. 19 is another one I am very fond of, but I think it the most difficult thing in the world to play.

The 20th Prelude is a very beautiful one, but with the 21st I find fault—musical fault. I am quite sure that when he started to write this he meant to make it a ballade for the orchestra. Apparently he failed to hit upon any second or third motive for succeeding movements, so he included it in the preludes. It is obviously written for first violin and two 'cellos, and it is not piano music at all. It is most poetical, I grant, but, emphatically, it was not meant for the piano. This is no decision arrived at in a hurry, I assure you. I thought over this matter for thirty years before I dared to express this opinion!

In the 22nd Prelude Chopin created energetic modern octave play. It was the first prelude of its kind in the world. In the 23rd Prelude pretty well all editions indicate short *legato* passages. Chopin never played such passages. He sometimes introduced a long *legato* passage, but never short ones of a few notes only. In the 24th the amateur would do well to remember that the whole beauty of this prelude is generally spoilt by the left-hand notes being banged. They should be *masqué* the whole time and should never be allowed to drown the right hand.

So much for the preludes. They are very beautiful and are worthy of the closest study and pains, not with a view of perfecting any stereotyped manner of playing each one, but of discovering the various methods which may be employed to bring out their beauty. Half the attraction of a beautiful woman lies in the various dresses she wears. She may be in blue to-day, in grey to-morrow, and in pink the day after, and with every change she appears more beautiful. So it is with the preludes. Each has a large wardrobe of different dresses. Do not, then, always dress them in the same colours.

I have dealt at some length with the preludes because, while they are always popular with pianists, most players play them in an absolutely stereotyped and uninteresting manner which utterly hides all their beauties. The amateur, almost without exception, practises them through and through in order to become technically perfect as regards the actual playing of the written notes. He or she, as the case may be, thus produces an absolutely colourless study almost entirely without interest and quite devoid of meaning. We have all seen the outlined painting-books of which children are so fond. A drawing of some simple subject is given in outline, and the child, with its box of paints, sets to work to paint it. Chopin, and, indeed, all music, is one great painting-book full of outline drawings, and those who play the piano are the children who attempt to colour them. As with children, so with musicians, artistic instincts are lacking through want of training, or because the soul is entirely without the necessary germ of art. The result is that the pictures are seldom more than uninteresting daubs. The result may be symmetrical enough, but the colours do not blend, and offend instead of please. Some are merely sketches in sepia lacking all brightness and beauty, others are in the hard black and white of crude contrast. But the real artist can make a beautiful picture out of quite an uninteresting subject by the careful choice and blending of his colours; he can even surround his subject with some subtle atmosphere all its own, until his work stands out by itself in comparison with the crude paintings of his fellows.

Perhaps more than any other composer Chopin requires deep thought and study before any one of his outline drawings is attempted, for his nature was such that he created, quite naturally, particular effects of tone and colour arrived at by none of his predecessors. These effects cannot be merely

copied from the works of anyone else, so that Chopin-playing becomes a special study in itself, requiring special training and special methods of interpretation. Of course, I do not mean to say that familiarity with the methods of other men is not of assistance. Indeed, it is of the most valuable assistance, and the finest Chopin-players are those who have mastered all the beauties of other composers, since only by having so done will they be able to fully see and understand all the new and unusual beauties that exist in Chopin, and the immense gulf which divides him from the rest.

Personally, although the public for some reason regard me purely as a Chopin-player, owing to the fact that his works figure so prominently on my programme through their being so popular with the public, I can play all composers equally well; and it is this very reason that makes Chopin's works so dear to me, for, knowing full well all the beautiful thoughts expressed by the rest, I can appreciate how much, as a whole, Chopin's works are more beautiful than those of other composers.

Practically every line he wrote is a line of perfect poetry. Even his most simple pieces are among the finest gems of our musical literature. Look at the études! Their worth does not lie in their merits from the point of view of musical construction, but in their immense poetical beauty. The very first one is among the harmonical wonders of the world. Yet this was written when he was but a youth of twenty! Whenever I play it, it always conjures up before my mind the picture of some exquisitely beautiful little child being bathed in a silver bath filled with milk and wine amid brightly-coloured, richly-scented flowers! And almost every one of them brings some similar picture before me.

Yet, with the études as with the preludes, each will be meaningless if improperly interpreted. Many of the most beautiful pieces of poetry in literature would seem uninteresting and flat if read by a bad reciter. In the same way, a good reciter will make attractive a poem whose beauties are not so apparent. A fine painter will light up each little beauty in his pictures until the smallest detail is attractive and strikes the eye. It is only the mediocrity whose work is characterized by sameness and lack of interest. There must be no mediocrity in the playing of Chopin.

Chopin was the father of modern piano technique. He called upon all the resources of his instrument, and, seeing that the piano of to-day is so immeasurably improved from what it was in his time, there is every reason why the player of to-day should be able to obtain the same effects, or even better ones than Chopin did, with much less difficulty. For instance, I referred just now to the accentuation of one note in a chord, the rest of the notes being played so lightly as to resemble the sighing of the breeze through the strings. This effect must have been very difficult on the old pianos, but it can be easily accomplished on, for instance, the Bechstein of to-day, which is the piano upon which I always play. Go to one of Godowsky's recitals and you will see to what height modern technique has come, for Godowsky is the king of the piano in this respect, and is unquestionably the finest exponent of technique in the world to-day. He owes his extraordinary powers partly to Chopin, who first showed what could be done in this direction, and partly to the modern piano, which makes possible so much more than Chopin could accomplish.

Present-day pianists, therefore, have everything in their favour. They have the finest brushes and the most beautiful outline drawings; all that they need acquire, then, is the musical insight which shall show them how to mix the pigments upon their palette and apply them most attractively upon the canvas.

DOUBLE DEALING

BY

W·W·JACOBS

MR. FRED CARTER stood on the spacious common, inhaling with all the joy of the holiday-making Londoner the salt smell of the sea below, and regarding with some interest the movements of a couple of men who had come to a stop a short distance away. As he looked they came on again, eyeing him closely as they approached—a strongly-built, shambling man of fifty, and a younger man, evidently his son.

"Good evening," said the former, as they came abreast of Mr. Carter.

"Good evening," he replied.

"That's him," said both together.

They stood regarding him in a fashion unmistakably hostile. Mr. Carter, with an uneasy smile, awaited developments.

"What have you got to say for yourself?" demanded the elder man, at last. "Do you call yourself a man?"

"I don't call myself anything," said the puzzled Mr. Carter. "Perhaps you're mistaking me for somebody else."

"Didn't I tell you," said the younger man, turning to the other—"didn't I tell you he'd say that?"

"He can say what he likes," said the other, "but we've got him now. If he gets away from me he'll be cleverer than what he thinks he is."

"What are we to do with him now we've got him?" inquired his son.

The elder man clenched a huge fist and eyed Mr. Carter savagely. "If I was just considering myself," he said, "I should hammer him till I was tired and then chuck him into the sea."

His son nodded. "That wouldn't do Nancy much good, though," he remarked.

"I want to do everything for the best," said the other, "and I s'pose the right and proper thing to do is to take him by the scruff of his neck and run him along to Nancy."

"You try it," said Mr. Carter, hotly. "Who is Nancy?"

The other growled, and was about to aim a blow at him when his son threw himself upon him and besought him to be calm.

"Just one," said his father, struggling, "only one. It would do me good; and perhaps he'd come along the quieter for it."

"Look here!" said Mr. Carter. "You're

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mistaking me for somebody else, that's what you are doing. What am I supposed to have done?"

"You're supposed to have come courting my daughter, Mr. Somebody Else," said the other, releasing himself and thrusting his face into Mr. Carter's, "and, after getting her promise to marry you, nipping off to London to arrange for the wedding. She's been mourning over you for four years now, having an idea that you had been made away with."

"Being true to your memory, you skunk," said the son.

"And won't look at decent chaps that want to marry her," added the other.

"It's all a mistake," said Mr. Carter. "I came down here this morning for the first time in my life."

"Bring him along," said the son, impatiently. "It's a waste of time talking to him."

Mr. Carter took a step back and parleyed. "I'll come along with you of my own free will," he said, hastily, "just to show you that you are wrong; but I won't be forced."

He turned and walked back with them towards the town, pausing occasionally to admire the view. Once he paused so long that an ominous growl arose from the elder of his captors.

"I was just thinking," said Mr. Carter, eyeing him in consternation; "suppose that she makes the same mistake that you have made? Oh, Lord!"

"Keeps it up pretty well, don't he, Jim?" said the father.

The other grunted and, drawing nearer to Mr. Carter as they entered the town, stepped along in silence. Questions which Mr. Carter asked with the laudable desire of showing his ignorance concerning the neighbourhood elicited no reply. His discomfiture was increased by the behaviour of an elderly boatman, who, after looking at him hard, took his pipe from his mouth and bade him "Good evening." Father and son exchanged significant glances.

They turned at last into a small street, and the elder man, opening the door of a neat cottage, laid his hand on the prisoner's shoulder and motioned him in. Mr. Carter obeyed, and, entering a spotless living-room, removed his hat and with affected composure seated himself in an easy-chair.

"AN ELDERLY BOATMAN, AFTER LOOKING AT HIM HARD, TOOK HIS PIPE FROM HIS MOUTH AND BADE HIM 'GOOD EVENING.'"

"I'll go up and tell Nan," said Jim. "Don't let him run away."

He sprang up the stairs, which led from a corner of the room, and the next moment the voice of a young lady, labouring under intense excitement, fell on the ears of Mr. Carter. With a fine attempt at unconcern he rose and inspected an aged engraving of "The Sailor's Return."

"She'll be down in a minute," said Jim, returning.

"P'r'aps it's as well that I didn't set about him, after all," said his father. "If I had done what I should like to do, his own mother wouldn't have known him."

Mr. Carter sniffed defiantly and, with a

bored air, resumed his seat. Ten minutes passed—fifteen; at the end of half an hour the elder man's impatience found vent in a tirade against the entire sex.

"She's dressing up: that's what it is," explained Jim. "For him!"

A door opened above and a step sounded on the stairs. Mr. Carter looked up uneasily, and, after the first sensation of astonishment had passed, wondered vaguely what his double had run away for. The girl, her lips parted and her eyes bright, came swiftly down into the room.

"Where is he?" she said, quickly.

"Eh?" said her father, in surprise. "Why, there! Can't you see?"

The light died out of the girl's face and she looked round in dismay. The watchful Mr. Carter thought that he also detected in her glance a spice of that temper which had made her relatives so objectionable.

"That!" she said, loudly. "That! That's not my Bert!"

"That's what I told 'em," said Mr. Carter, deferentially, "over and over again."

"*What!*" said her father, loudly. "Look again."

"If I looked all night it wouldn't make any difference," said the disappointed Miss Evans. "The idea of making such a mistake!"

"We're all liable to mistakes," said Mr. Carter, magnanimously, "even the best of us."

"You take a good look at him," urged her brother, "and don't forget that it's four years since you saw him. Isn't that Bert's nose?"

"No," said the girl, glancing at the feature in question, "not a bit like it. Bert had a beautiful nose."

"Look at his eyes," said Jim.

Miss Evans looked, and meeting Mr. Carter's steady gaze tossed her head scornfully and endeavoured to stare him down. Realizing too late the magnitude of the task, but unwilling to accept defeat, she stood confronting him with indignant eyes.

"Well?" said Mr. Evans, misunderstanding.

"Not a bit like," said his daughter, turning thankfully. "And if you don't like Bert, you needn't insult him."

She sat down with her back towards Mr. Carter and looked out at the window.

"Well, I could ha' sworn it was Bert Simmons," said the discomfited Mr. Evans.

"Me, too," said his son. "I'd ha' sworn to him anywhere. It's the most extraordinary likeness *I've* ever seen."

He caught his father's eye, and with a jerk of his thumb telegraphed for instructions as to the disposal of Mr. Carter.

"He can go," said Mr. Evans, with an attempt at dignity; "he can go this time, and I hope that this'll be a lesson to him not to go about looking like other people. If he does, next time, p'r'aps, he won't escape so easy."

"You're quite right," said Mr. Carter, blandly. "I'll get a new face first thing to-morrow morning. I ought to have done it before."

He crossed to the door and, nodding to the fermenting Mr. Evans, bowed to the profile of Miss Evans and walked slowly out. Envy of Mr. Simmons was mingled with amazement at his deplorable lack of taste and common sense. He would willingly have changed places with him. There was evidently a strong likeness, and——

Busy with his thoughts he came to a standstill in the centre of the footpath, and then, with a sudden air of determination, walked slowly back to the house.

"Yes?" said Mr. Evans, as the door opened and the face of Mr. Carter was thrust in. "What have you come back for?"

The other stepped into the room and closed the door softly behind him. "I have come back," he said, slowly—"I have come back because I feel ashamed of myself."

"Ashamed of yourself?" repeated Mr. Evans, rising and confronting him.

Mr. Carter hung his head and gazed nervously in the direction of the girl. "I can't keep up this deception," he said, in a low but distinct voice. "I *am* Bert Simmons. At least, that is the name I told you four years ago."

"I knew I hadn't made a mistake," roared Mr. Evans to his son. "I knew him well enough. Shut the door, Jim. Don't let him go."

"I don't want to go," said Mr. Carter, with a glance in the direction of Nancy. "I have come back to make amends."

"Fancy Nancy not knowing him!" said Jim, gazing at the astonished Miss Evans.

"She was afraid of getting me into trouble," said Mr. Carter, "and I just gave her a wink not to recognise me; but she knew me well enough, bless her."

"How dare you!" said the girl, starting up. "Why, I've never seen you before in my life."

"All right, Nan," said the brazen Mr. Carter; "but it's no good keeping it up now. I've come back to act fair and square."

Miss Evans struggled for breath.

"There he is, my girl," said her father, patting her on the back. "He's not much to look at, and he treated you very shabby, but if you want him I suppose you must have him."

"Want him?" repeated the incensed Miss Evans. "Want him? I tell you it's not Bert. How dare he come here and call me Nan?"

"You used not to mind it," said Mr. Carter, plaintively.

"I tell you," said Miss Evans, turning to her father and brother, "it's not Bert. Do you think I don't know?"

"Well, he ought to know who he is," said her father, reasonably.

"Of course I ought," said Mr. Carter, smiling at her. "Besides, what reason should I have for saying I am Bert if I am not?"

"That's a fair question," said Jim, as the girl bit her lip. "Why should he?"

"Ask him," said the girl, tartly.

"Look here, my girl," said Mr. Evans, in ominous accents. "For four years you've been grieving over Bert, and me and Jim have been hunting high and low for him. We've got him at last, and now you've got to have him."

"If he don't run away again," said Jim. "I wouldn't trust him farther than I could see him."

Mr. Evans sat and glowered at his prospective son-in-law as the difficulties of the situation developed themselves. Even Mr. Carter's reminders that he had come back and surrendered of his own free will failed to move him, and he was hesitating between tying him up and locking him in the attic and hiring a man to watch him, when Mr. Carter himself suggested a way out of the difficulty.

"I'll lodge with you," he said, "and I'll give you all my money and things to take care of. I can't run away without money."

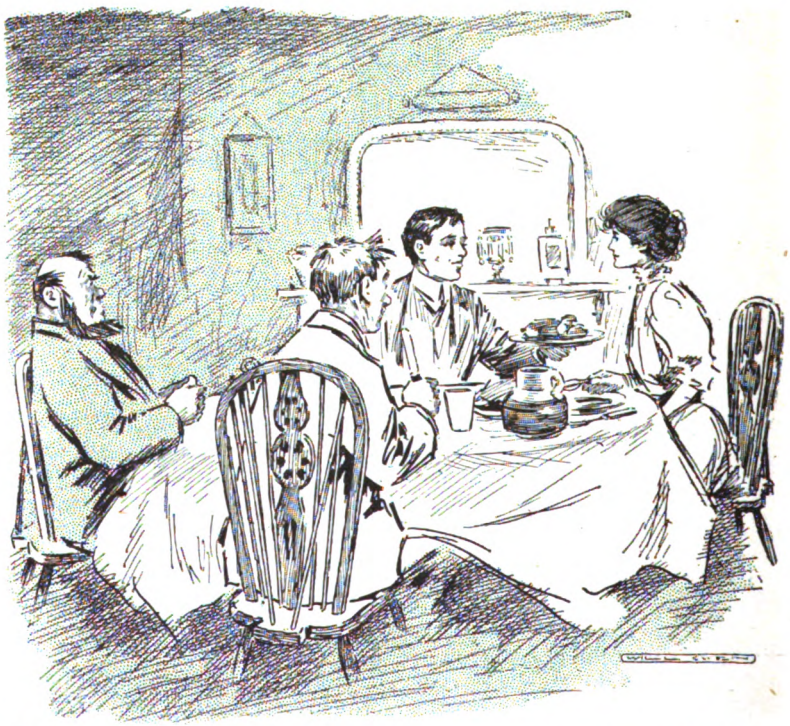
He turned out his pockets on the table. Seven pounds eighteen shillings and fourpence with his return ticket made one heap; his watch and chain, penknife, and a few other accessories another. A suggestion of Jim's that he should add his boots was vetoed by the elder man as unnecessary.

"There you are," said Mr. Evans, sweeping the things into his own pockets; "and the day you are married I hand them back to you."

His temper improved as the evening wore on. By the time supper was finished and his pipe alight he became almost jocular, and the coldness of Miss Evans was the only drawback to an otherwise enjoyable evening.

"Just showing off a little temper," said her father, after she had withdrawn; "and wants to show she ain't going to forgive you too easy. Not but what you behaved badly; however, let bygones be bygones, that's my idea."

The behaviour of Miss Evans was so much better next day that it really seemed as though her father's diagnosis was correct. At dinner, when the men came home from



"SHE PILED MR. CARTER'S PLATE UP SO GENEROUSLY THAT HER FATHER AND BROTHER HAD AMPLE TIME AT THEIR DISPOSAL TO WATCH HIM EAT."

work, she piled Mr. Carter's plate up so generously that her father and brother had ample time at their disposal to watch him eat. And when he put his hand over his glass she poured half a pint of good beer, that other men would have been thankful for, up his sleeve.

She was out all the afternoon, but at tea-time she sat next to Mr. Carter, and joined brightly in the conversation concerning her marriage. She addressed him as Bert, and when he furtively pressed her hand beneath the table-cloth she made no attempt to withdraw it.

"I can't think how it was you didn't know him at first," said her father. "You're usually wide-awake enough."

"Silly of me," said Nancy; "but I am silly sometimes."

Mr. Carter pressed her hand again, and gazing tenderly into her eyes received a glance in return which set him thinking. It was too cold and calculating for real affection; in fact, after another glance, he began to doubt if it indicated affection at all.

"A GENTLEMAN OF MIDDLE AGE WAS PEEPING ROUND THE DOOR."

"It's like old times, Bert," said Miss Evans, with an odd smile. "Do you remember what you said that afternoon when I put the hot spoon on your neck?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"What was it?" inquired the girl.

"I won't repeat it," said Mr. Carter, firmly.

He was reminded of other episodes during the meal, but, by the exercise of tact and the plea of a bad memory, did fairly well. He felt that he had done very well indeed when, having cleared the tea-things away, Nancy came and sat beside him with her hand in his. Her brother grunted, but Mr. Evans, in whom a vein of sentiment still lingered, watched them with much satisfaction.

Mr. Carter had got possession of both hands and was murmuring fulsome flatteries when the sound of somebody pausing at the open door caused them to be hastily withdrawn.

"Evening, Mr. Evans," said a young man, putting his head in. "Why, halloa! Bert! Well, of all the——"

"Halloa!" said Mr. Carter, with attempted enthusiasm, as he rose from his chair.

"I thought you was lost," said the other, stepping in and gripping his hand. "I never thought I was going to set eyes on you again. Well, this is a surprise. You ain't forgot Joe Wilson, have you?"

"'Course I haven't, Joe," said Mr. Carter. "I'd have known you anywhere."

He shook hands effusively, and Mr. Wilson, after a little pretended hesitation, accepted a chair and began to talk about old times.

"I lay you ain't forgot one thing, Bert," he said at last.

"What's that?" inquired the other.

"That arf-quid I lent you," said Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Carter, after the first shock of surprise, pretended to think, Mr. Wilson supplying him with details as to time and place, which he was in no position to dispute. He turned to Mr. Evans, who was still acting as his banker, and, after a little hesitation, requested him to pay the money. Conversation seemed to fail somewhat after that, and Mr. Wilson, during an awkward pause, went off whistling.

"Same old Joe," said Mr. Carter, lightly, after he had gone. "He hasn't altered a bit."

Miss Evans glanced at him, but said nothing. She was looking instead towards a gentleman of middle age who was peeping round the door indulging in a waggish game of peep-bo with the unconscious Mr. Carter.

Finding that he had at last attracted his attention, the gentleman came inside and, breathing somewhat heavily after his exertions, stood before him with outstretched hand.

"How goes it?" said Mr. Carter, forcing a smile and shaking hands.

"He's grown better-looking than ever," said the gentleman, subsiding into a chair.

"So have you," said Mr. Carter. "I should hardly have known you."

"Well, I'm glad to see you again," said the other, in a more subdued fashion. "We're all glad to see you back, and I 'ope that when the wedding-cake is sent out there'll be a bit for old Ben Prout."

"You'll be the first, Ben," said Mr. Carter, quickly.

Mr. Prout got up and shook hands with him again. "It only shows what mistakes a man can make," he said, resuming his seat. "It only shows how easy it is to misjudge one's fellow-creeturs. When you went away sudden four years ago, I says to myself, 'Ben Prout,' I says, 'make up your mind to it, that two quid has gorn.'"

The smile vanished from Mr. Carter's face, and a sudden chill descended upon the company.

"Two quid?" he said, stiffly. "What two quid?"

"The two quid I lent you," said Mr. Prout, in a pained voice.

"When?" said Mr. Carter, struggling.

"When you and I met him that evening on the pier," said Miss Evans, in a matter-of-fact voice.

Mr. Carter started, and gazed at her uneasily. The smile on her lip and the triumphant gleam in her eye were a revelation to him. He turned to Mr. Evans and, in as calm a voice as he could assume, requested him to discharge the debt. Mr Prout, his fingers twitching, stood waiting.

"Well, it's your money," said Mr. Evans, grudgingly extracting a purse from his trouser-pocket; "and I suppose you ought to pay your debts; still——"

He put down two pounds on the table, and broke off in sudden amazement as Mr. Prout, snatching up the money, bolted headlong from the room. His surprise was shared by his son, but the other two made no sign. Mr. Carter was now prepared for the worst, and his voice was quite calm as he gave instructions for the payment of the other three gentlemen who presented claims during the evening endorsed by Miss Evans. As the last departed Mr. Evans, whose temper had been gradually getting beyond his control, crossed over and handed him his watch and chain, a few coppers, and the return half of his railway ticket.

"I think we can do without you, after all," he said, breathing thickly. "I've no doubt you owe money all over England. You're a cadger, that's what you are."

He pointed to the door, and Mr. Carter, after twice opening his lips to speak and failing, blundered towards it. Miss Evans watched him curiously.

"Cheats never prosper," she said, with gentle severity.

"Good-bye," said Mr. Carter, pausing at the door.

"It's your own fault," continued Miss Evans, who was suffering from a slight touch of conscience. "If you hadn't come here pretending to be Bert Simmons and calling me 'Nan' as if you had known me all my life, I wouldn't have done it."

"It doesn't matter," said Mr. Carter. "I wish I was Bert Simmons, that's all. Good-bye."

"Wish you was," said Mr. Evans, who had been listening in open-mouthed astonishment. "Look here! Man to man—Are you Bert Simmons or are you not?"

"No," said Mr. Carter.

"Of course not," said Nancy.

"And you didn't owe that money?"

"Nobody owed it," said Nancy. "It was done just to punish him."

Mr. Evans, with a strange cry, blundered towards the door. "I'll have that money out of 'em," he roared, "if I have to hold em up and shake it out of their trouser-pockets. You stay here."

He hurried up the road, and Jim, with the set face of a man going into action against heavy odds, followed him.

"Your father told me to stay," said Mr. Carter, coming farther into the room.

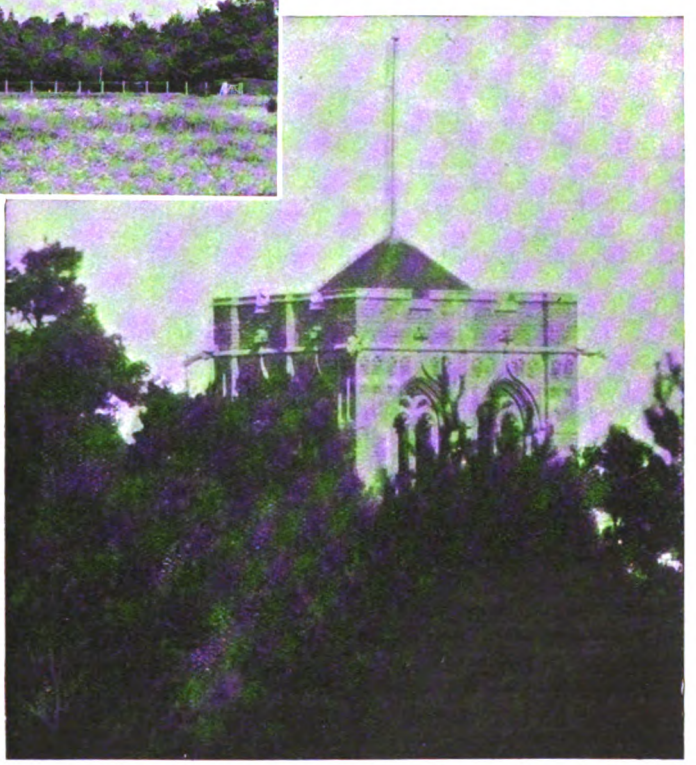
Nancy looked up at him through her eyelashes. "You need not unless you want to," she said, very softly.

UP-TO-DATE TELEPHOTOGRAPHY.

By Captain Owen Wheeler.

"WHAT is a telephoto lens, and how does it do its work?" Well, perhaps the simplest answer to both these questions is the explanation that in most cases a telephoto lens is simply an ordinary photographic lens of comparatively short focus converted into a photographic telescope by means of what is known as a negative attachment. You take the everyday photographic lens, and behind this, at a certain separation, you mount a diminishing lens, and there you have your telephoto lens, which gives different magnifications of the image produced by the first lens only, according to the separation of the lenses and the distance of the lens from the plate. This may sound rather technical, but there is not essentially much more in it than there is in the proper adjustment of a telescope or a microscope. And it is really very interesting to be able, with the help of a little glass, measuring sometimes only half an inch in diameter and a small portion of an inch in thickness, to render an ordinary photographic lens capable of annihilating distance, and of bringing out into appreciable size and clearness objects which, in an ordinary photograph, would be the merest specks.

Telephoto lenses were first discussed almost simultaneously by an Englishman, the late Mr. Thomas Dallmeyer, and a German, Dr. Miethe, and naturally they created a great deal of interest among scientists and photographers, and also among engineers, sailors, and soldiers, who saw in telephotography much that might prove extraordinarily useful to them in their respective professions. But telephoto lenses proved in practice rather complicated and troublesome instruments, and, although numbers of them were manufactured and sold, and here and there some wonderful results, especially in the clear air of Switzerland, were obtained, the large percentage of failures was very discouraging, and many even skilful and experienced photographers would have nothing to do with the new departure. Latterly Mr. Dallmeyer succeeded in obtaining considerable popularity for a beautiful and complete little telephoto lens called the "Adon," but, generally speaking, telephotography until lately has remained rather at a standstill, and those who practised



Oatlands Church, Surrey, taken with an ordinary lens, as shown in the small picture, and below with a telephotographic lens from the same standpoint.

it were fain to admit that, except in favourable circumstances, it was apt to prove a disappointing process.

Quite recently some of the main drawbacks to telephotography have been removed by the employment of a special lens-hood, on the merits of which modesty forbids me to dilate, since I was associated with its introduction. It is enough to say here that this simple, and in some respects ancient, device prevents a quantity of useless light from entering the lens, and only allows those rays to pass which are used in the formation of the image. The result is that, given a clear day, it is possible to obtain telephotographs, even at high magnifications, which are bright and sharp — not flat and veiled as telephotographs taken with unhooded lenses ordinarily are —and, indeed, practically undistinguishable from everyday products of the camera. This can be done, too, with apparatus of the everyday sort with a few quite inexpensive adjuncts. Even a telephoto attachment to the ordinary lens is not a very serious matter, one of first-rate quality being procurable new for less than five pounds, while additional telenegative lenses can be adapted at a much lower rate. For work up to about thirteen magnifications a square-form half-plate camera, with a good half-plate lens of, say, seven and a half-inch focus, and two telenegatives, with focal lengths of, say, thirty and seventy millimetres respectively, will be found sufficient. Most of the telephotographs here shown were taken with a simple outfit of this description, but for sensational performances one has to have a camera with a longer extension.

The weathercock of St. Michael's, Weybridge (1), with an ordinary camera and (2) with a telephotographic lens.

Even supposing we content ourselves with thirteen magnifications, the power placed in our hands by the telephoto lens is enormous. Let us take the case of one of several of my illustrations which show this enlargement, and reflect that, in area, the image of an object in the telephotograph is one hundred and sixty-nine times that of the image of the same object in the photograph taken by the ordinary lens. My friend, Mr. Edgar Clifton, one of the best telephotographers living, happily expresses these enlargements in postage-stamp terminology. Thus, in one case we should have a single penny stamp; in the other a sheet containing stamps to the value of fourteen shillings and a penny! A still more striking difference occurs in the matter of what is familiar to every photographer under the name of "equivalent focus." Most of the small photographs shown here as having been taken with the ordinary lens were secured with a "half-plate" objective having an equivalent focus of about seven inches. Now, in order to obtain a photograph giving as big an image as one of my telephotographs at thirteen magnifications, one would require a lens having an equivalent focus of nearly eight feet! Such a lens would probably weigh nearly as much as a man and cost hundreds of pounds. So, even in point of economy, a telephoto lens is uncommonly good value.

Putting this last sordid consideration aside, let us consider what a difference the possession of a telephoto lens makes to the ordinary photographer by reason of its faculty for, so to speak, annihilating distance. Except as a "bird's-eye view," the average photograph taken from the top of a hill is seldom satisfactory. There may be many points of great interest in the surrounding landscape, but the ordinary photographic lens renders them on such a microscopic scale that they become wholly insignificant and unimpressive. "Yes," you may say, "but what is to prevent your

subsequently enlarging these tiny images, and so producing pictures of decent size?" The answer to this is that the granularity of the films makes enlargement to more than four or five diameters very unsatisfactory. If I were to enlarge the negative—a very good one, by the way—of the view (shown on page 431) taken from St. George's Hill, Weybridge, with the ordinary lens, I should obtain an extremely poor result compared with even a "low-power" telephotograph, while any such result as that shown as having been obtained at twenty-one magnifications would be altogether out of the question.

I sometimes amuse myself by climbing to some "coign of vantage," picking out various objects in the distance, and telephotographing them by way of, so to speak, adding footnotes to the general view. Occasionally it is possible to take half-a-dozen or more interesting pictures without moving the camera stand, and the sense of power which this conveys is only equalled by the sense of convenience, especially to one whose increasing years and figure render the business of climbing hills with a heavy outfit a somewhat tedious one.

Of course, you have to "know how" before you make the telephoto lens such a useful servant as the above implies. But the difficulties are nothing like what they were before the use of the extending hood was known. I only mention them to show that, although telephotography is well within the reach of any photographer of average experience and skill, it is not quite so easy as snap-shotting, and that anyone who wants to rival Boissonas's famous photograph of Mont Blanc, which was taken at a distance of fifty miles and shows a magnification of thirty-six diameters, must learn to do more than press a button and let an obliging professional "do the rest." My personal aim has been in the direction of technical quality, and even these reproductions will, I think, show that my negatives must have the "pluck" and vigour which are necessary to produce bright, clean prints.

Unless one can get this sort of result it is

(1) Photo and (2) Telephoto of "The Eyot," Weybridge.

not of much use to talk of applying telephotography seriously to naval, military, or engineering purposes. Taking the last-named first, it is not difficult to conceive of cases in which a telephotograph might prove extremely valuable to an engineer engaged in some tremendous constructive operation, such as, for instance, the spanning of a great river

The Wey Bridge with ordinary lens and (below) the same taken with a power of thirteen magnifications.

by a lofty bridge. Photographs of a work at different stages of its accomplishment are almost invariably useful as well as interesting, but a photograph of the middle of a bridge under which a rapid river is running may be nearly if not quite beyond the power of an ordinary lens. A telephotograph will often give the necessary detail without any trouble.

When we come to naval and military requirements the uses of telephotography are obvious. Giving due priority to the sea service, there is little doubt that the day will come when every warship will be fitted with a really adequate telephotographic outfit which, in the hands of skilful operators, will play an important part in naval reconnaissance, besides being freely used for recording the positions of ships during manœuvres and exercises. A telephotographer standing on the deck of a battleship or cruiser several miles from shore can on a clear day, if he knows his business and is suitably equipped, obtain a quantity of pictorial information which may some day prove invaluable.

Turning to the military uses of telephotography, here again the demands of reconnaissance are met to a wonderful extent by the telephoto lens—assuming, of course, that it is in proper hands. Ordinary photography is not nowadays of much use on a military campaign, except for purposes of record. The picture given by the ordinary lens of

anything two or three miles off is seldom of the slightest value to a general, even if it be enlarged several diameters. And it is not often that in these days of long-range weapons a scout hampered with a camera can get much nearer to an important position than two or three miles, without running a very great risk of being shot or captured. It is at this point telephotography steps in quite naturally, and affords facilities which as yet

are, I think, imperfectly understood. Of course, there are difficulties, in this country especially, in the way of hazy weather. But haze can be to some extent "cut out" by the use of yellow screens and orthochromatic plates; and even on doubtful days it is sometimes possible to get telephotographs showing the character of a stretch of country with a clearness likely to be appreciated by the most exacting general. Where it is possible to get within three or four miles of a definite object of military interest, such as a fort or battery, the telephotographer with "high power" lenses can sometimes render inestimable service, as a single individual working cautiously at that range is not likely to be observed except by accident, and even if "spotted" runs no great risk of being intercepted or picked off.

If instantaneous telephotography at even five or six magnifications can be rendered fairly simple and certain there is a great future before it for Press work. The successful Press photographer of the present day is gifted with considerable "nerve," and does not hesitate on occasion to crowd in upon his victims a good deal more closely than the latter like. The results are often very wonderful, but not infrequently they are spoilt by the proximity of the camera to the object, and the consciousness of the latter that he or she is being snap-shotted for the benefit of the illustrated papers. If the photograph could be taken at a distance six or eight times as great the results would often be much more pleasing, and frequently snap-shots would be possible which are now out of the question altogether. Advantage has already been taken of the telephoto lens to secure hundreds of beautiful pictures of birds and beasts in their native haunts, and the application of the same principle to the human subject may lead to the capture by the camera of many a shy celebrity, and to the natural rendering of scenes of which now it is almost impossible to get any but a strained and sometimes quite ridiculous record.

View of distant house (1) with ordinary camera—the house is just below the X—(2) Telephotographed with a power of twenty-one magnifications.

BEAUTY and the CAMERA.

PORTRAITURE in England, as a wit once remarked, is either solar or insular. We may leave the gibe for the painters to deal with; we have at present to speak only of the art in which the sun is prime factor, and the lens, sensitive plate, and paper are contributory. It is possible that Daguerre's great discovery has not achieved all for which its disciples once hoped. That is a moot point which it is not safe to confide to the judgment of a Royal Academician. Certain it is that within the past few years, in the hands of ingenious and dexterous practitioners, it has made extraordinary strides towards perfection.

In photography, as in painting, a good subject is a prime consideration. On the other hand, what the lens may consider a good subject and so faithfully report may not so strike the retina of Mr. Sargent or of Mr. Cope. How often has the artist of the camera been baffled by the very perfection of the sitter!

"It is a mistake to suppose," says Mr. Lafayette, one of the ablest portrait photographers of the day, "that mere physical beauty lends itself easily to the camera. In fact, I should be rather inclined to reverse the proposition.

"The more beautiful the sitter, the more difficult it becomes to reproduce her glowing charms with any degree of fidelity. For physical attributes alone do not constitute the perfect woman. She has soul, personality, magnetism—call it what you will—and here it is that the camera, save in the hands of the artist, so often is disappointing. It is easy for it to see and record the surface of things. The effects of light and shade may be reflected with microscopic exactitude, but how often does it happen that the resulting picture is dead, inanimate, and lacking in all semblance of vitality!"

In this respect the painter would seem to have an insuperable advantage over the photographer. The skilful wielder of the brush will so draw out the individuality of his sitter that the finished portrait becomes valuable rather as a psychological study than by reason of its physiological accuracy. Such an apocalypse of soul the camera can with difficulty achieve, albeit it can and often does obtain effects which are exceedingly pleasing to the eye. More especially is this the case with children. Their entire freedom from self-consciousness, together with the sprightly proclivities so frequently found among diminutive humanity, renders them delightful subjects for the photographer's art.

Several firms, indeed, make a speciality of this kind of work, and many are the wiles they employ to bring laughter to the lips of their tiny patrons. Certainly the prospect of a portly photographer striving on hands and knees to reproduce the peculiar vagaries of some jungle denizen cannot fail to edify and entertain the most *blasé* of twentieth-century infants.

With the *grande dame*, however, it is different, and few are they who succeed in acquiring what Lady Randolph Churchill has called the "art of being photographed." When the lady of high degree faces the camera she is apt to assume an air of impassive stolidity. The photographer dare not ask her to look pleasant, and if he did his subject would probably relax into an expression of anguished amiability painful to behold. He cannot even emulate Mr. Hoggenheimer and dangle a blue monkey in front of her lady-

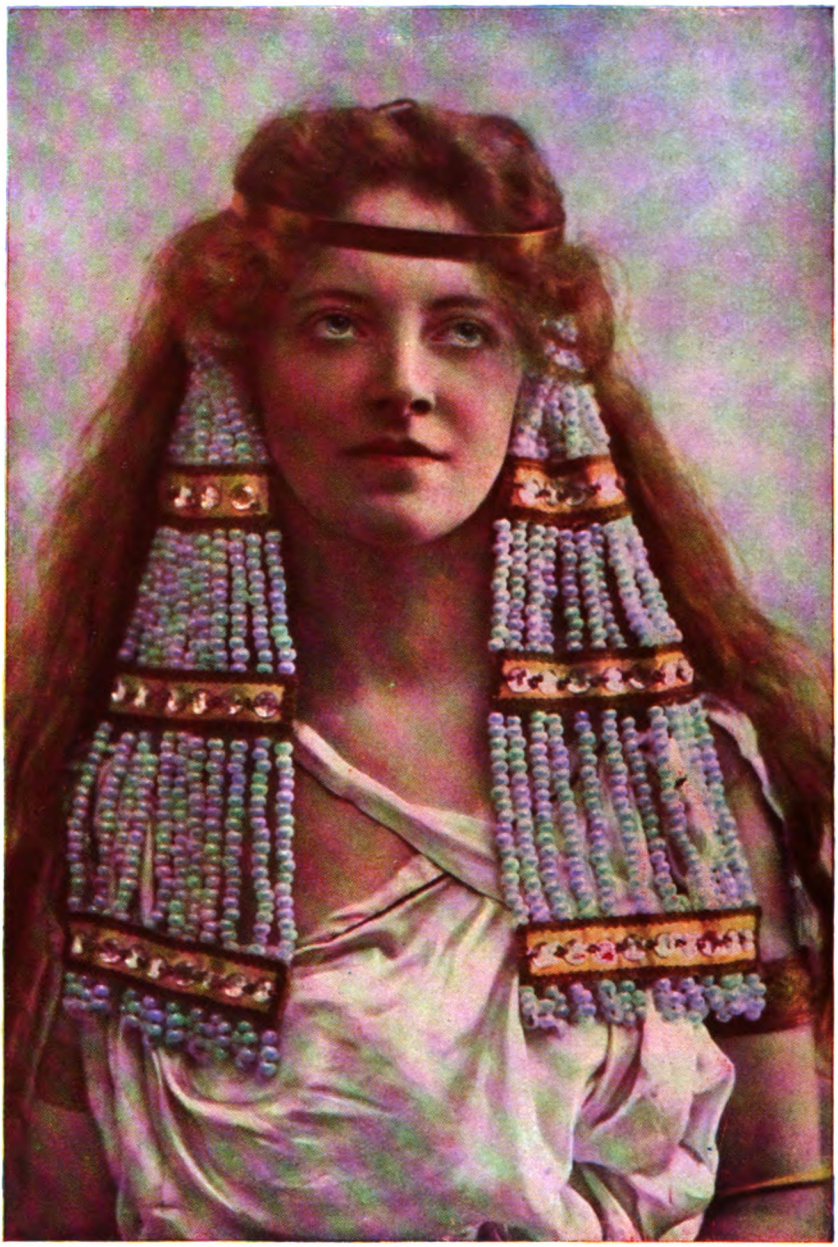
MISS DORIS BERESFORD
From a Photograph by Bassano, London.

BARONESS DE FOREST.
From a Photograph by Lafayette, London.

THE DUCHESS OF PLESS.
From a Photograph by Lafayette, London.

THE DUCHESS OF WESTMINSTER.
From a Photograph by Lafayette, London.

MISS ELEANOR DE TRAFFORD.
From a Photograph by Lafayette, London.



MISS MARION LINDSAY.
From a Photograph by Bassano, London.

MISS GLADYS COOPER.
From a Photograph by Bassano, London.

MISS BETTY CALLISH.
From a Photograph by Bassano, London.

ship's nose. And so a picture is frequently taken which, as an index to the personality of the sitter, is absolutely devoid of value.

What, then, is the secret which causes the aristocratic sitter to reveal so much of her soul to the wielder of paints and pigments, and at the same time to present an impenetrable mask to the photographer? The relations between patron and patronized are stiff and unnatural. There is no unbending —no pretence at geniality. The subject is never at her ease, and expressionless, listless, lifeless portraits are not unseldom the result. Here the actress and the professional beauty has the advantage of her more highly-placed sisters. With many stage darlings, posing to the photographer is quite as important and arduous a profession as pirouetting to the public, and certainly no less remunerative.

"Artist and sitter," observes the head of the firm of Bassano," "must co-operate. Light is the spirit of the medium, but if the spirit is only summoned formally and perfunctorily, what can you expect but a formal and perfunctory result? As to the progress of our art, if you compare the photographs taken to-day with those of twenty odd years ago, you will see what advances have been made. One apparently trifling detail may strike you—we do not insist so much upon contemporary sartorial fashions. Hence come the grace, the freedom, the indefiniteness of a bared neck and shoulders which may belong to any decade, or even to any century."

One of the first of the school of "artistic" photographers, Mrs. Cameron, who flourished in the 'sixties, used to declare that the camera had no business with mere physical beauty, dependent as that is so much upon colouring, but upon "attitude, exact proportions, and expression." Colouring, indeed, promises no longer to limit the achievements of the photographer. The invention of the three-colour process, as it is called, is destined to revolutionize photography. As the reader is doubtless aware, this process involves the making of three negatives, each recording a primary colour, the other two having been screened off from the sensitive plate. When three carbon transparencies from the plates are superimposed, the result is almost the same as if pigments had been employed, for the red and blue make purple, and the yellow and blue form green, and there are, of course, all the intermediary tints. Other systems there are, or on the eve of perfection, which will enable the camera to reproduce the colours of Nature. But the portrait-painter, nevertheless, professes to be undismayed. He declares that photography can never reproduce character; that it can never express the *soul* of the sitter. Then, again, he denies that a photograph can even be regarded as subjective art, as that art must be which expresses "the feeling of the artist towards his subject as well as the subject itself." In reply to this the photographer points to the various new processes, such as platinum and glycerine and gum-bichromate, which admit of so much direct handwork on the print, and replies that he can now declare his temperament through this medium at least as well as by chalk and brushes and paint.

That art enters largely into photography cannot be denied, and a contemplation of the photographs which accompany this article emphasizes the truth. Take the portrait of Miss Eleanor de Trafford. Is it not full of composition and character, with much of the charm of craftsmanship which we find in a portrait by one of the old British masters?

The Duchess of Westminster and the Duchess of Pless—the two beautiful daughters of Colonel Cornwallis-West—are no novices in the art of sitting to the photographer. Their portraits are glowing with life and vitality, and in looking at them one might easily believe that they are the inspired achievements of some great artist's brush.

What is known as "costume photography" is a branch of the art capable of infinite possibilities, and in the hands of such skilled craftsmen as Messrs. Bassano delightful effects are not infrequently achieved. Whether we regard the sweet simplicity of dress shown in the accompanying picture of Miss Gladys Cooper, or advert to the imperious Egyptian princess with her dangling ropes of pearls and gold-encircled brow, impersonated by Miss Marion Lindsay, we cannot but admire the artistic genius which makes such results possible.

The portrait of Miss Doris Beresford, also reproduced, might easily be taken for one of Lawrence's masterpieces; while in the picture of Baroness de Forest there is a similar delicacy of composition. The almost classical severity of Miss Betty Callish's features lends itself well to the camera, and her portrait deserves a prominent place in any comprehensive gallery of English beauties.

Death Comes in Motley.

By Tom Gallon.

THE big clock in the stable-yard in the distance chimed three dolefully as the man nimbly climbed the great gates leading to the avenue; he sat for a moment on the top of the gates—straddlewise—to listen; it seemed as though he sat thus poised above the sleeping world, and listening. He was breathing heavily as he climbed down the other side, and gaining the grass, the better to muffle his footsteps, stole towards the house.

All the world was very still—so still, indeed, that for a moment the man turned, within twenty yards of the gate he had scaled, to look back towards the closed lodge and the white road outside. Was there a face there, pressed close against the rails? Did white hands grip the ironwork, so that the bars cut deep into the flesh? Dared he go back to see?

He stole back a yard or two, and the thing was gone; then he faced it again when, a moment later, among the trees, some shadow eluded him and was gone. Only this time it was the shadow of a man coming towards him—a man that changed to a bloodstained thing, with arms flung upwards, before it fell, and seemed to disappear into the earth.

He drew his coat about him, and stepped out from the shadows of the trees on to the gravel.

Twenty yards behind him was the gate, securely locked; but that which he feared could pass through a gate and reach him. Two hundred yards farther on lay the great house, set, as it seemed, stark and flat against the moonlit sky, inside that were safety and peace, and the world shut out.

All at once the deep bay of a hound shattered the silence; it was taken up by smaller yelps and barks from other dogs. The man stopped, and looked back towards the gate; but he might see that face again there, and he knew that he could not go. He stepped again on to the grass, and waited; heard the clamour die down; and then went on again in the direction of the house. It was a side door he unlocked, and locked again after him; then he stood in the place, breathing hard and listening. Safe!

He went up a narrow staircase through the servants' quarters, stopping every now and then to listen. He seemed to know the place well; frowned, even in that moment, and shook his head when he saw that a window had been left open by some careless servant. He went on up the stairs until his feet were muffled by thick carpet, traversed the length of a corridor, and opened the door of a room and went in. He turned the key in the lock, and after a quick glance at the long windows, to assure himself that they were shrouded with thick curtains, switched on the electric light. He took a bunch of keys from the pocket of the long, shabby overcoat he wore, and, selecting a key, walked towards a cabinet in a corner of the room; paused in the very act of stooping to unlock it, and knelt there, looking back over his shoulder, listening. Was that a hand that had gripped the handle of the door outside and turned it?

"HE SAT FOR A MOMENT ON THE TOP OF THE GATES."

Was that someone listening and breathing outside the closed door?

He drew a deep breath, and unlocked the door of the cabinet and drew out a decanter of spirits and a glass; carried them to the big writing-desk in the middle of the room, with another pause for listening, and set them down there. He poured some of the spirit into a glass and drank it off; poured out some more and drank that. Then he seated himself heavily on the edge of the desk and drove his hands deep in the pockets of the coat, and remained for a long time in thought.

He got up presently, and walked across the room to the fireplace and looked at himself in a mirror over it. It was a strange face that looked back at him—a gaunt, lean face, smeared and streaked grotesquely with some species of paint—a face to laugh at, and yet to shudder at. Thrust on the back of his head was an old battered bowler hat; round his neck, showing under the collar of the dingy overcoat, was a sort of frill of tattered linen.

As he turned away from the glass with a shudder his eyes fell upon the portrait of a young girl, set in a frame, standing on the mantelpiece. He picked it up and looked at it hungrily for a moment, with his eyes blazing; then, with a groan, set it down and suddenly dropped an arm along the length of the mantelpiece, and laid his painted face upon it. And so for a long time was silent.

He went back to the great writing-desk and put his hand upon the decanter; dropped the hand from it, and walked away. Diving again into the pocket of his overcoat, he drew out slowly a revolver, let it lie in the palm of his hand for a moment or two while he looked at it, and then laid it on the desk. He unfastened the overcoat and shook it from his shoulders, so that it fell in a shabby heap behind him; and thus stood revealed in the extraordinary dress he wore.

He was dressed as a street juggler or mountebank, in a species of ridiculous frilled doublet, spangled in places, and with trunks and tights. It was a shabby dress that had seen much wear, and the man who wore it did so obviously as a disguise. The face that was smeared with paint was the face of a man of culture—a student; the hands that dangled below the ridiculous frills of linen were the well-kept hands of a gentleman.

He unlocked a drawer of the desk and dropped the revolver in, and turned the key on it; then walked to a corner of the room, and opened a door and passed out of sight. The room was a bed-chamber, and from it he brought certain garments, into which it was obvious he intended to change; he trailed them along carelessly behind him on the floor. Coming to the centre of the room he stopped again, and this time his eyes were fixed upon a portrait hanging on the wall. It was the portrait of a young and rather boyish-looking man, with a frank and engaging face; he might have been a little more than twenty years of age. In that strange fashion which portraits have when the eyes are painted looking out of the picture, those eyes seemed now to be following the man in motley, with the clothes trailing in his hand.

Those were the eyes that had seemed to look at him through the bars of the gate; this was the face that had raced side by side with his along the moonlit roads—that the smiling mouth that had screamed to him to stop for the love of God, because there was blood upon him! He dropped the clothes he held and, walking across the room with his face averted, turned the thing round, so that it dangled and swung against the wall, with its back outwards to the room.

Then, as he stooped again for the clothes, he was absolutely certain that the handle of the door moved; where the yellow line of light stretched across the bright brass, he was certain that a little dent in it went out beyond the light and came back again; someone was trying the door. He stole across to the desk and unlocked the drawer noiselessly, and took out the revolver; then, crouched like one ready to spring, stole to the door, and, after listening for a moment, softly turned the key in it; waited, and then, drawing himself back, flung it wide suddenly, holding his weapon ready.

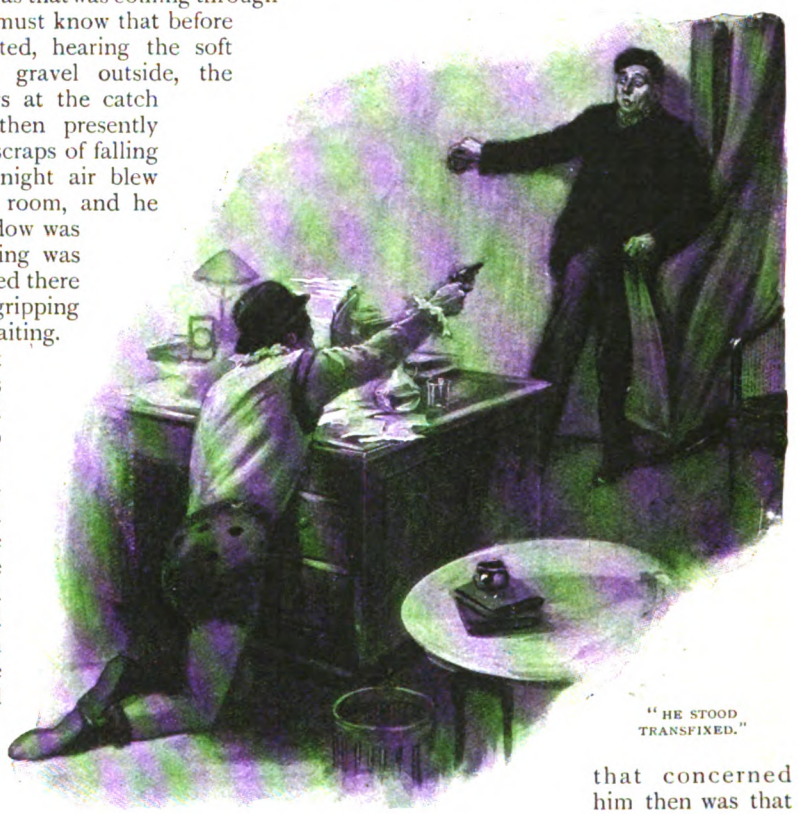
No one there; no sound in all the silent house. He closed the door again and locked it, and went back to the desk; dropped his weapon upon it; and covered his face with his hands, and shuddered and laughed and shook like one with a palsy. Dear God! would it be always like this?

Very slowly, while he sat there, his hands came away from his face, and were held so, but a few inches away; the man was listening again. This time the sound was unmistakable. Just a light crunching of the gravel outside the long curtained windows; then a soft bump, as though some body had been pressed suddenly against the windows themselves. Something was outside there, striving to get in; the man's hands fell, and his jaw dropped, and his eyes were round with terror, as he thought what that Something was that

was striving to reach him. He caught up the revolver—for there was one way to end the horror—and, still staring at the windows, backed away from them, and dropped to his knees behind the great desk, and crouched there, waiting. On an impulse, however, he got up and switched off the light; then went back to his former position.

A dreadful fascination was on the man; he must know what it was that was coming through that window—he must know that before he died. He waited, hearing the soft crunching of the gravel outside, the fumbling of fingers at the catch of the window; then presently the light tinkle of scraps of falling glass. The cool night air blew into the darkened room, and he knew that the window was open, and the Thing was inside. He crouched there behind his barrier, gripping the revolver, and waiting.

He heard in that death-like stillness the sound of a hand moving softly up and down the wall, feeling for something. The hand found it, and there was a click, and the room was flooded with light. And there, just within the window beside the curtains, stood a rough-looking man, with a round, rather foolish face—an utter stranger!



"HE STOOD TRANSFIXED."

The sheer shock of it revived the man behind the desk; he faced life, and he was armed; the Unknown no longer menaced him. Here was something of flesh and blood—an intruder to be dealt with. All his fears seemed to fall away from him; he knelt there, armed and confident, and faced the astounded man who had forced his way in.

The man, for his part, stood drawn up against the wall, with one hand still on the switch of the electric light, and the other gripping the curtain. He was staring at this apparition, peering at him so unexpectedly in the room; this man with the smeared and painted face, and with the levelled revolver pointing straight at him. He stood transfixed; an ejaculation spluttered out from his lips.

"Gawd o' mercy!"

The man behind the desk got to his feet slowly, displaying his length in that incongruous dress he wore. The staring of the man in utter bewilderment was lost upon him for the present; he had forgotten his dress and appearance, and everything. All that concerned him then was that he was in his own house, and that he had trapped this thief who had broken in to steal.

"If you move I'll fire," he said, quietly. "Now, do as I tell you; come a little to the right—so—sit down there; if you try to get away I'll shoot you like a dog."

The intruder edged along the wall and dropped into the chair indicated. He gave one sharp glance at the window through which he had come, and at the door of the room; then shrugged his shoulders, and apparently resigned himself to the inevitable.

"It's a fair cop," he said. "I ain't goin' to give no trouble, guv'nor; it's on'y the luck of the game. An' I ain't goin' to whine about it neither; I takes things as they come." He folded his arms philosophically, but still

kept his bright, sharp eyes on the man with the weapon.

"So you're a burglar—eh?" said the man in motley. "And you thought that at something near to four o'clock in the morning you were safe, and might creep in here and get a good haul? You see you were mistaken."

The burglar laughed, with a little dismal note in the laughter. "Well—an' wot if I did?" he retorted. "I thought the crib was safe enough for crackin'; I've been 'angin' about a matter o' three days fer me charnce. Then yesterday I see the two gents goin' off fer a little 'oliday—an' I knew there was on'y the servants lef' be'ind—an' 'ere I am." He shrugged his shoulders disgustedly again, and looked down over his folded arms at his broken boots. "I've bin 'ungry, an' I've bin more than thirsty, an' this is the end of it."

The surprise of this adventure had thrown the first man off his guard; this was something out of the scheme of his reckoning—something concerning which he had no plans. He stood there in that absurd dress handling the revolver; it was quite on an impulse that he pointed the weapon at the decanter, and motioned towards the man.

"You say you're thirsty; have a drink."

The man looked up at him suspiciously, got slowly to his feet, and moved towards the desk. More than once he hesitated before his hand closed on the neck of the decanter, but at last he poured out some spirit, and began to drink it in great gulps. The man with the revolver had moved away from him, still keeping the weapon handy; the burglar was looking at him curiously.

"Rum togs o' yours, guv'nor," he ventured at last. "Bit of a fancy-dress ball on—eh?"

The other man glanced down at his dress; spoke sharply in reply. "Fancy-dress ball? No; nothing of the sort. What do you mean?"

The other man's curiosity overcame his fears. He came a little round the desk and looked the man in motley up and down. "Nigh on four o'clock in the mornin', an' a gent in a dress like that—alone—an' with a barker," he said, slowly, pointing to the revolver. "Wot's the game?"

"There's no game," said the other, sharply. "This is my own house, and I suppose I can do as I like in it? Why do you stare at me like that?"

"I'm wonderin'," said the man, looking at the other with a new interest, and coolly helping himself to spirits. "If you ast me, I don't believe you belong 'ere at all," he added, aggressively, thrusting his face towards that painted face that shrank from his. "I don't believe you're after no good 'ere at this time o' the mornin'."

"I tell you it's my own house and I can do as I like in it," said the other. "Come, now—I don't want to be hard on you; I want to help you if I can. Drink that up—and go."

"Go?" The burglar stared at him open-mouthed as he set down his glass. "Go? You mean that you ain't going to rouse the 'ouse, or 'and me over to anybody?"

"I mean that I'm going to let you off," said the other. "I mean that you're free to walk out of that window again and get clear away."

The burglar stared for almost a minute at the other man; looked about the room in a dazed sort of way; then thrust his hands in his pockets, and announced his decision.

"I ain't goin'," he said.

"What do you mean by that?" demanded the other. "I tell you you're free."

"And I tell you I ain't goin'," repeated the burglar. "There's summink about this I don't like—summink a deal worse than breakin' in to collar a bit o' the 'all-marked. I ain't goin'."

He seated himself again in that chair into which, but a few minutes before, he had dropped trembling, stretched out his legs, and assumed an easy attitude. "I want to know wot the game is, an' I want to know 'oo you are."

"You dog! I can shoot you——"

"Do it," broke in the burglar, quickly. "It's wot you daren't do; you're afraid it might be 'eard. That's it!" he exclaimed, excitedly springing to his feet and speaking almost in a shout—"you're afraid it might be 'eard!"

"Silence—you fool!" cried the other, with a glance at the door; and in a moment the burglar had his cue.

The situation was changed; the man who had broken in, and who had cowered before this stronger man, strolled round the room, with a wary eye upon the weapon, making observations. He came to the door and gripped the handle and turned it; nodded grimly, and whispered the one word—"Locked!" Then, still watched by the other, he came to that fallen heap of clothing and turned it over with his foot; looked from it to the man, with the puzzle beginning to shape itself neatly in his mind.

"You was goin' to change?" he whispered; and the other man did not answer.

After another saunter round the room the burglar came to the desk and stood there,

lounging against it; almost it seemed that in his face and in his voice when he spoke was some growing pity for this haunted, hunted man standing there at his mercy.

"Look 'ere, guv'nor—seems to me you're in a bit of a 'ole," he said. "Maybe you're in a worse 'ole than wot I am; 'cos I'm top dog just now, ain't I?"

"You think you are," said the other, breathing hard, and toying with the revolver.

"Come, now, don't be 'aughty about it," retorted the burglar. "I've bin in worse 'oles than most men in me time; shouldn't be surprised if I couldn't 'elp you out of this one."

"I don't want your help; I want you to go," exclaimed the man in motley, huskily. "Don't you know that there are times in a man's life when he may be driven mad in sheer despair? Don't you realize the risk you run?"

The other shrugged his shoulders, and did not immediately reply. He seemed to be considering many things—perhaps to be looking for that final piece of the puzzle which should enable him to fit the thing together. He was studying his man; presently he began, awfully enough, to put questions which the other must answer.

"Three days ago, when I was a-layin' out in the woods about 'ere watchin' for me charnce, there was two men livin' 'ere with the servants—two young men. I knew all about that—'eard all about it before I come down. Now, wot I can't make out is 'ow *you* come to be 'ere—an' 'oo you are. The two gents is away; I see 'em go."

"Don't I tell you that this is my house—that I live here?" He was glancing furtively at the other man—watching him shrinkingly. "I've been called back—on business."

"You've bin called back—four in the mornin'—in that get-up?" He pushed his rough cap back from his forehead, and stared. "Then—in the name of Gawd—where's the other one?"

The man at whom he stared balanced the revolver between his hands, and looked down at it. "I—I don't know. A good way away by this time, I expect. How the devil should I know?"

"Of course not." The burglar gave a swift glance round the room; saw that picture that had been turned with its face to the wall. He stepped nimbly across, and turned it. The man in motley shivered, and looked away.

"Yesterday *two* of yer goes out; I was watchin', an' I see yer go; to-night *one* comes back—an' 'e can't bear to look at the face of the other. You're lookin' w'ite, guv'nor; take a drink."

The burglar poured out some of the spirit, and held the glass towards the other man. Very slowly the man in the strange dress came across, and after looking at the glass stupidly for a moment, took it, and began to drink. His hand shook so that he spilt some of the liquor; before reaching mechanically into his sorry clothes to find a handkerchief, he dropped the revolver on the table. It was the burglar's opportunity. In a flash the weapon was in his hands, and he had backed away.

"HE LEANED FORWARD OVER THE DESK."

"You ain't got nothink to be afraid of, guv'nor," he said. "Jim Filer ain't the sort o' man to go back on a pal wot's in a 'ole; I on'y wanted to level things up a bit. Now we can talk comfy, without any fear of this 'ere thing goin' off."

He opened the barrel of the revolver, and dexterously spun it round; whistled softly between his teeth. "You've fired one off already," he whispered; and he glanced at the shivering man before him, and then at the portrait of the boy. "Is that wot it means, guv'nor?"—he leaned forward over the desk, and stared, not without awe, into the face of the other man—"does it mean murder?"

The man at whom he looked let his head sink slowly on his breast. Jim Filer drew a deep breath, and closed the revolver with a snap, and dropped it the length of his arm.

"Two of yer goes out, an' one comes back. But wot about the clobber? W'y that git-up to do the job in?" He was obviously puzzled; there was something about this business he did not yet understand.

Suddenly it seemed that the tongue of the other man was loosened; perhaps he felt that in that hour he stood alone in the world, with this man who had fathomed his secret; perhaps, with the remembrance of that dead face that had looked into his, and had seemed to follow him along the quiet roads under the light of the moon, he felt that he must talk to someone.

"He was in the way—and I hated him," he said, passionately. "I brooded over this—meant to do it a hundred times, and was afraid. I never should have done it but for another reason; I never should have found the courage. But the reason came—and I made my plans."

The burglar sank down again into that chair against the wall, and laid the revolver on one knee, and his hand upon it, and listened. The man in the strange dress paced up and down at the other side of the room, and spoke in hurried whispers, almost as if to himself.

"He was rich, and all this great place belonged to him. I was poor, and he paid me a salary—a miserable sum that should keep me clothed and give me a little pocket-money. He was good to me in a sense; he took me out of a garret in London, and brought me here, and gave me all the books I needed, and fed and kept me."

"A friend of yours, guv'nor—or related?" asked the other.

"He was my cousin. If he died, everything he had became mine; I should be rich, and should have the world before me. I had never wanted the world before—had never wanted to be rich; but there was a woman."

Jim Filer nodded sagely, as though he knew all about that part of the business.

"What can a wretch like you know about such things?" burst out the other, passionately. "In my narrow life I had seen nothing, known nothing; she came to me across the sunlit fields, and I loved her. I have sold my immortal soul for her; there is the brand of Cain upon me because of her; there is someone lying dead under the stars—because of her. What can such a creature as you know of that?"

"I wouldn't sell my soul for any woman, alive or dead," retorted Filer, emphatically. "But w'y them togs?" He pointed to the other's dress with the weapon he held.

The man looked down at himself with a certain whimsical sadness. "We went out together on a walking tour, and directly we started I made up my mind that that was my chance to do it. On the road we met a dingy wretch—a travelling mountebank, who wore such a dress as this, and who was starving. This cousin of mine befriended him—helped him—and I saw my opportunity. I slipped away at night on an excuse, and got to London; bought a dress like that worn by the mountebank; bought that thing you hold in your hand. The mountebank has gone on his way; I had contrived to slip into his pocket a case containing bank-notes belonging to my cousin. The bank-notes will be changed—the man traced; it will be known that a man in such a dress as this"—he smote himself upon the breast—"was seen hanging about late at night near the inn where my cousin was staying. The juggler will be followed—will be unable to account for the bank-notes. Do you understand?"

"You're a deep 'un, guv'nor," replied the other, after a pause. "And you slipped back 'ere to change your clobber; an' I suppose you'll turn up in the mornin' at the place w'ere yer cousin sleeps—and, oh, won't you be surprised not to find 'im?"

"That's the scheme—and it would have worked out properly—but for you."

"Yes; I am a bit in the way, ain't I?" said Jim Filer, toying with the revolver. "Fancy me comin' in at sich a time, an' findin' you 'ere. Wot a lot I could say if I 'ad a mind to say it—couldn't I?"

"I think I know what's in your mind,"

came the reply, after a gloomy pause. "You'll hold me fast with this secret; you'll batten on me, and make me do your bidding—make me pay anything you please to ask—make my life a misery and a degradation and a terror. You'll start up at my elbow when I'm most secure; you'll put in an appearance when I least expect you; you'll be my shadow, haunting me, as another shadow will haunt me, till I die."

"You put it rough, guv'nor, but you put it pretty straight," said Filer, with a grin. "And, after all, you've got to pay for sich a little game as this 'ere."

"Yes, I've got to pay—but not the price you think," he replied, slowly. "The danger's too great; the price would be too great. Some day in your cups you'd blurt the thing out; some day a hand would be clapped on my shoulder, and I should know that the end had come. However, I'll make a bargain with you. How much do you want?"

"That's talkin' business," said Filer, getting to his feet with alacrity and coming forward to the desk. "'Ow much can yer give me down on the nail now?" He rested the revolver, barrel downwards, on the desk, and leaned forward with an easy swagger.

And then in a moment, while he was unguarded, the weapon was twisted out of his hand; and the other man faced him, dominant and strong, and with a purpose in his eyes before which Jim Filer quailed. Slowly the man in motley raised the revolver until it touched his own head, and the eyes in the gaudily-painted face seemed to smile into those of the man who watched.

"For Gawd's sake—not that!" panted the burglar.

"I've looked into the eyes of Death to-night; now it's your turn," was the imperturbable reply. "Turn your face away, if you're afraid. I'll not be at the mercy of such a man as you. Good night—and good-bye."

Jim Filer whimpered, and put his arm across his eyes, and turned away. There was a loud report that seemed almost to shake the house; a sob, as a body fell across the great desk. Then, when the white-faced man dared at last to look, the thing lay there outstretched, with the weapon gripped in its dead hand. Above in the house there was a noise of the opening of doors, and cries, and the running of feet upon the stairs; then the door handle was gripped and shaken.

The door had begun to yield to the pressure of strong shoulders when Jim Filer slipped out through the windows and ran off into the darkness, sobbing and whimpering inarticulately as he went.

"THE MAN IN MOTLEY RAISED THE REVOLVER."

The Life Story of a Sycamore "Key."

By John J. Ward,

Author of "Minute Marvels of Nature," "Peeps into Nature's Ways," etc. Illustrated from Original Photographs by the Author.

IT is an afternoon in early autumn, and now and again the wind is inclined to be decidedly boisterous.

It so happens that I have stopped my cycle against a large sycamore tree, and on the side of the hill there is a deep railway cutting, which this tree overlooks. So strong was the last gust that several of the leaves have been altogether disconnected and carried fluttering away into the cutting below. Besides these leaves, what was apparently a small host of bewildered insects has also been dislodged by this fitful gust. But then I observe that the erratic movements of these apparent insects are almost immediately converted into a straight-away course, each one whirling along its individual path through space, as though by some surprising instinct it had selected that particular course. Some went flying far away, while others alighted upon the banks of the cutting at no great distance from the tree, just according to the impetus with which they each started off. Also, it at once became obvious that these objects were not insects. In fact, one erratic member has just landed at my feet here, and, of course, it is a winged sycamore seed, or, if you prefer it, a sycamore "key."

Yes, the sycamore has finished its season's work. The tree has been exceedingly busy from the earliest hours of spring until now, preparing to meet these blustering winds that suddenly spring up in autumn, and now to each gust it offers a number of its offspring; for it may well be said that the sycamore's "keys" are its children. Indeed, while watching each little party start off with each succeeding breeze, I can almost imagine I hear the tree saying, "There, my children, I have done my best for you; now go out into the world and prosper."

What the parent has done for each of its offspring is to provide it with two nurse-leaves which will feed and nourish the baby sycamore plant until it can spread its own leaves out to the sunlight, and send down its own little root into the soil, and so feed itself. Furthermore, the tree has protected each of its seeds and their nurse-leaves by a strong outer covering, one side of which is developed into a flattened wing; and how useful that wing is to the offspring I have already explained in describing how surprisingly the seeds can travel.

This ingenious method of dispersing the seeds by the agency of the wind, from the evolution point of view, may at first seem difficult to account for. Here we have a plant producing seeds with remarkable powers of flight, considering that they are only seeds. How did they first become aeronauts and learn to utilize the air to their advantage? Let us trace the development of one of these winged sycamore "keys," and I think it will not only explain how the seed acquired its wings, but will also introduce to us some very fascinating sidelights on sycamore history.

Let us bear in mind that the fluttering and whirling seed is only the first step in Nature's scheme. When the seed reaches the soil it is travelling with such force that it often penetrates soft ground, and so gets half sown, and even if it alights upon grass it generally lands low down well between the numerous blades, rather than on their surface. Then, assisted by the rain and the accumulating *debris* of autumn, it slowly becomes embedded in the soil, and is seen no more.

In illustration Fig. 1 we see what happens to the seed that has successfully carried out these first manœuvres. It remains hidden away in the humus and moist soil throughout the remaining autumn and winter months—indeed, until the end of March of the next year. Then, from the lower side of its rounded end, a delicate and pale-coloured shoot breaks through the hard protective skin, which has now become soft and decayed. This shoot is the root of the young sycamore plant just beginning to seek

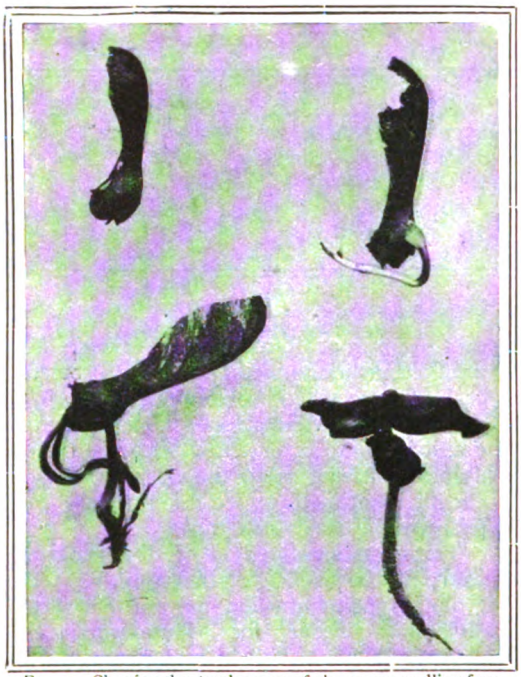


FIG. 1.—Showing the development of the young seedling from the sycamore "key."

for moisture and mineral substances. In the two upper examples of the illustration the root is seen developing from the seed.

On the opposite end to this root are two large and carefully-folded green leaves, and as the young root penetrates the soil they begin to unfold and spread themselves out to the sunlight. They, like the root, are seeking food; for these leaves can assimilate food material from the atmosphere. In the two lower examples of the illustration the leaves are shown unfolding, the final one showing the wing completely thrown off, leaving nothing but the shrunken base still adhering.

The young root works its way among the interstices of the soil, and sends up supplies of moisture and mineral matters in solution to the nurse-leaves, which, however, are not the true leaves of the plant; indeed, it only needs a glance at their shape as they unfold to see that they are quite unlike sycamore leaves. In Fig. 2 we see them at the next stage, the example on the right being fully expanded.

FIG. 2.—The unfolding of the nurse-leaves.

The function of the nurse-leaves thenceforth is to assimilate carbon from the impurities of the atmosphere, or, technically speaking, from the carbon dioxide of the atmosphere, the poisonous gas we exhale in respiration, thousands of tons of which are daily passed into the atmosphere from the chimneys of manufacturing works. The carbon derived in this way is chemically combined by the leaves with the watery sap supplied by the root, the ultimate product of this combination — in which the energy of sunlight is interwoven—being energy-yielding starches and similar food materials, that will build and sustain a young and growing plant.

The nurse-leaves being spread out to the sunlight, therefore, the machinery of growth, as it were, comes into motion, and, consequently, further development proceeds apace. In Fig. 3 the young plant is shown as it appears about the middle of April. It will be observed that the central part is now occupied with two leaves—the first pair of true leaves of the young sycamore tree—and between these leaves is a tiny bud where other leaves are being formed.

FIG. 3.—About the middle of April the first pair of true leaves appear.

Later on these leaves open out, and their place is then occupied with two younger leaves. In Fig. 4 this further development is shown. It should now be noticed that the nurse-leaves are shrivelling up, and soon they will fall away. The young plant no longer needs nurse-leaves, for it now has green leaves of its own with which to capture carbon dioxide, and its root is branching in all directions in the soil and plentifully supplying the necessary

FIG 4.—Eventually they spread themselves out to the sunlight, the nurse-leaves then shrivelling up.

sap to manufacture still other leaves. It is true that the leaves have not yet assumed the palmate shape characteristic of the sycamore species, but nevertheless each pair now produced gets nearer to the type.

The little central bud steadily persists in producing new leaves for a while, and then from its heart it pushes forward a central branch that bears beautifully-formed leaves in pairs along its length. That tender little first branch may some day be the great trunk of a bold sycamore tree several feet in diameter and encased in strong bark. In illustration Fig. 5 we see the young branches shooting forth from what once were buds, and spreading out their graceful leaves to capture still more carbon and sunlight energy.

When the tree gets on somewhat in years, and has made its structure firm, it turns its attention towards other important matters besides those of green leaves and branches. In Fig. 6 is shown an effort of this kind. Here we see a bud opening and producing something more than green leaves. In Fig. 7 we see it at a later stage, and there it becomes obvious that a pendent stalk of flowers is being produced. By about the middle of May these flowers have reached their perfection, and I would like you to investigate them with me—not because they are at all striking in beauty or colour (indeed, they are small, greenish, and usually very sticky to the touch, and therefore not particularly attractive as flowers), but so that I can show you how the sycamore goes to work to produce its winged seeds.

We arrive at our sycamore tree, let us say, at the end of May, and it is a sunny afternoon with little or no wind. As we reach the tree we observe that the air round about it is swarming with flies; moreover, from the grass and hedges near at hand, as you move, swarms of flies of many and varied species rise buzzing upwards. Why these flies are gathered there becomes obvious presently—they are seeking the sycamore flowers. There are blow-flies, flesh-flies, house-flies, hover-flies, alder-flies, and innumerable other species; there are honey bees, humble bees, and wild bees of many kinds; indeed, it is a veritable

FIG. 5.—The young branches shooting forth from what once were buds.

FIG. 6.—A bud opening and producing something more than green leaves.

FIG. 7.—It becomes obvious that a pendent stalk of flowers is being produced.

flies' picnic. We pull down by means of our walking-stick one of the hanging racemes of flowers, and at once become aware of its strong honey-like scent, and at the same time we perceive that the flowers are quite sticky by the abundance of a sugary substance that they are producing. Why the sycamore entertains this motley throng of insects we have now to see.

In the first place the sycamore's flowers have no showy petals to attract bees, butterflies, and moths; bees are attracted in large numbers, but by the strong sweet smell of the nectar. In truth the sycamore lays out its flowers especially for pollination by flies; its yellowish and brownish green flowers are a kind of fly speciality, attracting them much more strongly than would brightly-coloured flowers. In Fig. 8 are shown some fully-developed examples of the flowers, and a wild bee is seen travelling along one of the leaf stalks. Also in the top left-hand corner is seen another of these bees engaged in seeking the nectar and pollen of the flowers. I may say here that when these insects are busy amongst the flowers it is very difficult to show them in a photograph, since their colours so closely resemble those of the flowers themselves. The illustration will, I think, show clearly that each little flower has put forth numerous stalked stamens, or pollen-producing organs, and when the bees and flies climb up the hanging bunches of flowers they become dusted with fertilizing pollen. By the time a fly has travelled over the flowers of a well-developed shoot his natural colours are more or less obliterated by the yellow dust from the stamens.

Now, when a spray of flowers appears, the first flowers to open generally produce large quantities of pollen; in fact, they are frequently devoted entirely to that purpose, and after performing that function they fall away and perish. Other flowers higher up the stalk, however, when they first open develop like those shown in Fig. 9, producing first a central object divided at its apex, but with stamens which either come to maturity later or not at all. Having now grasped these little details of the floral structure, we shall, I think, understand what part the fly, as dusty as "the miller of the Dee," plays in the sycamore's scheme for pollination.

The base of the central objects shown in Fig. 9, and previously referred to, will be

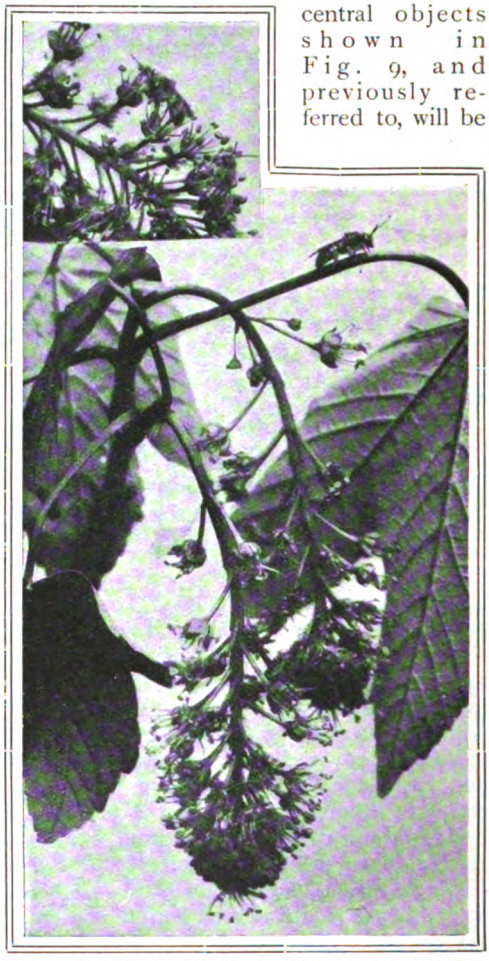


FIG. 8.—The fully-developed flowers which, at the end of May, attract swarms of flies of many species—In the top left-hand corner a wild bee is seen feeding on the nectar of the flowers.

FIG. 9.—Stigma-bearing flowers, whose pollen-producing parts develop later or not at all.

seen to be pale-coloured (owing to their being covered with tiny white hairs) and divided into lateral pointed halves; behind these are pollen-producing stamens just developing, and farther behind are the enclosing green parts of the flower. Of course, a fly or a bee dusted well with pollen on reaching these later-developed flowers, instead of clinging to the stamens as it moved amongst them (as it is seen doing in the top left-hand corner in Fig. 8), would have to hold to the central object in each flower while it searched for nectar around the base of the hairy part below. Now the divided part on the end of this central object is both rough and sticky, and as the fly rubs against it some of the pollen is sure to be conveyed to it. In fact, if you saw it under a magnifying lens after a dusty fly had visited the flower, it would appear as shown in Fig. 10, the irregularites on its surface being due to the tiny pollen grains adhering to it.

The fly, having consumed all the available nectar, then leaves the flower to visit another bloom, still carrying plenty of pollen with it to pollinate other stigmas, or its next visit may be to a branch where pollen only is being produced, and there it will gather more of the fertilizing element. And that is what the fly has been doing for the flower; it has pollinated its stigma, which now can go on and develop until it becomes—what? That we have now to witness.

The plant has produced an abundance of flowers, each of which was well provided with nectar; some of these flowers have produced only pollen-bearing stamens, but some have gone farther and produced in addition a central ovary, protected with tiny hairs, in which seeds were to be matured, after the pollen-dusted fly had paid a visit; for when the flower is pollinated fertilization commences, and so the seeds become perfected and continue their development.

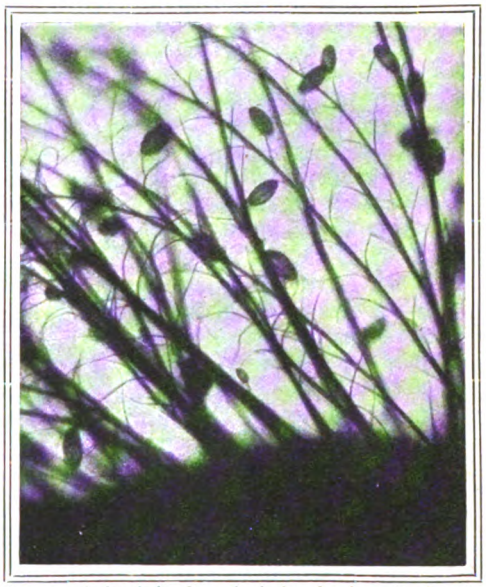


FIG. 11.—A few hairs from the body of a bee, showing the pollen grains held by delicate branches from the main hairs, magnified three hundred and fifty diameters.

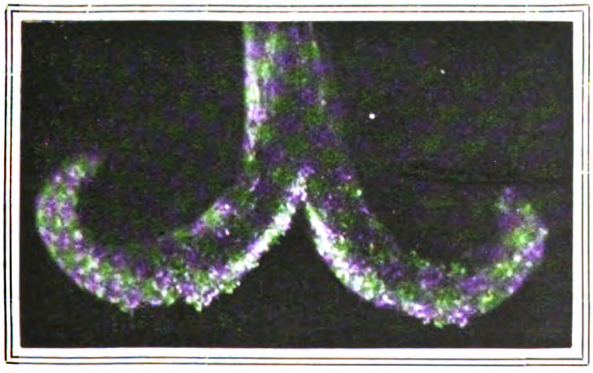


FIG. 10.—A magnified view of a stigma after having been visited by a fly, showing the pollen grains upon it.

In Fig. 11 I have shown you a few of the hairs on the body of one of the bees seen in Fig. 8, magnified about three hundred and fifty diameters, and it is interesting to notice the pollen grains adhering amongst them, held there by delicate branches from the main hairs; for these hairs are not simple hairs, but hairs specialized to conveniently carry pollen from flower to flower, for it need scarcely be said that if the plant evolves devices that assist the bee, the bee will evolve measures of a reciprocal character. This is just a hint of the many interesting aspects of this fascinating subject.

FIG. 12.—Showing how the flowers slowly change into sycamore "keys."

But we have not yet discovered how our sycamore "key" is produced. In Fig. 12 you may see the "keys" in the process of manufacture. You will notice that at the end of the lowermost shoot are some male flowers (*i.e.*, bearing stamens only), but higher up on the same shoot there are others in which, if you look closely, you will see that the central part bearing the stigma has shrivelled up and the ovary has enlarged into a two-sided winged object. In fact, when they grow a little larger each one of these flowers will form a pair of sycamore "keys." The process of change is more apparent in the upper example, where each hairy ovary is seen slowly developing into two winged seeds. In the last illustration, Fig. 13, the work is seen completed, and I scarcely need inform you that in each of those winged seeds there is a little seedling plant, for have we not previously seen one develop from such a seed? However, should you need further convincing, you have but to anticipate Nature by carefully cutting open with the point of your penknife the rounded base of a fully-developed seed, and there you will find the little plant carefully packed away, and you may poke it out and unfold its nurse-leaves, as these are quite large enough for you to examine with the unaided eye.

There now only remains the question, how the seeds should have learned to develop wings to soar upon the wind? Well, that is exceedingly simple. The ovary, to commence with, is flat and divided into two halves, each bearing a thin edge at its upper corner. Now, naturally, some seeds would, in the early stages of the sycamore's history, occasionally be thinner and flatter at their corners than others, and, when the time came for the seeds to fall from the parent tree, these thinnest seeds would get carried farthest by the wind, and would consequently stand the best chance of prospering, and so from these early and accidental examples have been slowly evolved the more efficient forms, until to-day we have the seed, or "key," as we know it.

Finally, how was the graceful whirling flight of the seed acquired? Well, that, I think, is equally plain. Naturally, a seed winged only on one side, or with nearly all its weight to one side, owing to its centre of gravity having an eccentric position, would spin in falling; hence, as the seed has developed and broadened its wings, this gyratory movement has continued, and probably been strengthened from the fact, which I have previously pointed out, that it helps the seed to penetrate the earth when its flight is suddenly interrupted.

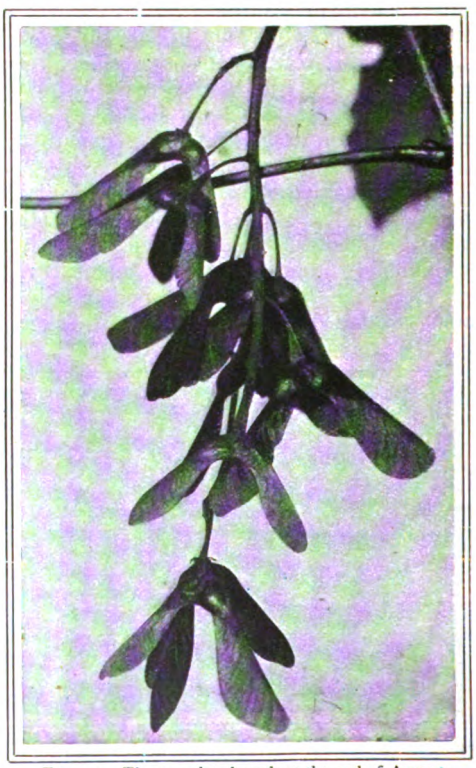


FIG. 13.—The completed work at the end of August.

STORIES STRANGE AND TRUE.

I.—The Secret of the Temple.

By Frederic Blair. Jaekel.

THERE are tricks in all trades, but probably the most remarkable devices employed to guard trade secrets are the ingenious methods of preventing discovery used by the counterfeiters of India. These gentry obtain particularly profitable results by the manufacture of spurious coins apparently of ancient mintage, and hence of value to the archæologist and collector. Indeed, while travelling through India it is well to examine every coin taken as change, so great is the amount of counterfeit money in circulation. The manufacturers of these coins have never been caught, and probably never will be if they continue to resort to such inventive devices — one of which, with the manner of its discovery, is described in the following article—of keeping their plant and appliances from being unearthed by the authorities.

THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO ONE OF THE TEMPLES.
From a Photograph.

About midway between Delhi and Bombay, and six miles across country from the little town of Borivili, is situated the village of Kanheri. The region is not infested with the snap-shotting tourist, but, although few travellers ever visit Kanheri, the place is one of the most absorbingly interesting in the whole of India.

Here, under the hills, are a wonderful series of lavastone grottos and temples carved out of the solid rock, and of almost fabulous antiquity. Of these there are probably a hundred in all. What is called the Great Temple is eighty-eight and a half feet long by thirty-eight feet in breadth, and, singularly enough, is built like a basilica, with nave and side isles. The roof of the nave is forty feet above the floor and rests upon thirty-four columns, higher than those at Elephanta, the capitals of which are decorated with ornate carvings. Save for this ornamentation the inside of the temple is without sculpture.

In all the other caves or grottos tracings of brushwork and plastering are still to be seen, and the crumbling remains of masonry terraces and gardens can be found on different sides of the hills. All these temples were much venerated by the Buddhists, but the many other sanctuaries added more recently show no trace whatever of the Buddhist cult, and are decorated exclusively with Brahminical symbols. Many of the temples contain immense cisterns, the water percolating through the mountain-side, which affords an irreproachable filter.

For several years the Dunbar cave, one of the Kanheri series, was shrouded in an apparently unfathomable mystery. No native could be bribed to go near the place,

and even the casual traveller gave it a wide berth. Tales were current in and about Bombay that this particular cave was haunted by an evil spirit, and anyone who has been in India knows full well the effect that such a rumour has on the nerves of a native. The cause of it all was that, upon entering this great cave-temple, which is ninety feet long, forty-two feet wide, and some nine feet in height, the most unearthly, nerve-racking sound would now and again, at regular intervals, issue out of its ink-black interior. Where it came from nobody knew or even cared to find out. Sometimes it resembled a whine, and sometimes it sounded like a sort of gurgle, but it was always blood-curdling. Speculation ran rife as to its cause—that is, when the natives were bold enough to speculate at all. Some said it was an evil spirit, others held that it might possibly be produced by some fearsome wild animal. Whether evil spirit or wild animal, however, the mysterious noise had one and the same effect: for several years the Dunbar cave was left severely alone to its weird wails and fathomless gloom.

OUR BULLOCK VICTORIA (ON THE LEFT) ON THE ROAD TO KANHERI.
From a Photograph.

It was while loitering in Bombay, awaiting some important news from home, that I heard of this curious "mystery of the caves of Kanheri," as it was called.

One day a friend of mine came to me and proposed a trip to Kanheri, firstly, to visit the caves and grottos, and, secondly, if our nerve failed us not, to ascertain for ourselves the cause of the mysterious noise in Dunbar cave which had so effectually scared the natives. He said the trip could be made in one day and we could pass the night at Borivili on our return journey. The business promised excellent, and so I readily agreed to accompany him.

The following morning at seven o'clock we boarded a train on the Bombay and Central India Railway for Borivili, arriving there about ten o'clock. After considerable negotiation we secured the only bullock-cart in the town to take us the six miles to Kanheri. Into this vehicle we quickly piled ourselves, in order to prevent our driver, who was already meditating upon his rashness, from backing out of his bargain. Having arranged ourselves as comfortably as possible—a difficult matter in an Indian bullock-cart—our Jehu squatted himself on the tongue between the two bullocks, and we were off.

For the first mile the road seemed very good, and we began congratulating ourselves upon the prospects of a delightful trip. We passed several native huts, out of which the children swarmed excitedly and followed us for some distance. We seemed to be somewhat of a mystery ourselves. The mangy, nondescript native dogs would trot up to the rear of the cart, take several prolonged sniffs, and then, standing in their tracks, voice their disgust in loud bayings.

"WE CAME TO A COOL STREAM, WHICH WE FORDED."
From a Photograph.

Soon we entered a dense forest, where the road grew rapidly worse. Two miles farther on we came to a cool stream, which we forded, and then began the tedious picking of our way up to the higher ground. Never have I experienced a rougher road, and the ancient cart all but toppled over on several

occasions. Finally we were compelled to walk, which we continued to do until the road came to an abrupt ending on the top of a lava mound about a mile from the village of Kanheri.

By means of various pantomimic gestures we succeeded in making a native understand that we wished to explore the caves. It was a rather difficult business; at first he seemed fully convinced that we were trying to hypnotize him! He offered to act as our guide willingly enough, and we quickly made ready. After giving explicit instructions to our teamster to await our return, we started off for the caves, our guide in the lead carrying on his head the lunch basket and other impedimenta.

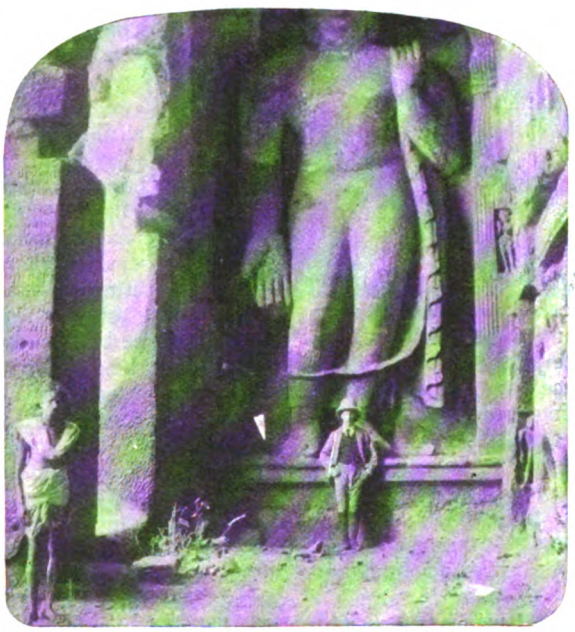
The trail led first up and then down. The ground seemed to be of volcanic formation, as was the whole section of mountain under which the caves were situated. We had been running, climbing, and crawling for some time, trying to keep pace with our guide, when he came to a sudden halt, placed his load on the ground, and plunged into a tangled conglomeration of overhanging vines and underbrush. We followed as best we might and, after about twenty yards of hide-and-seek with our native, came upon a small clearing. The famous temple of Kanheri, with its dark, arched doorway, its ornate vestibule, and its hieroglyph-covered walls, baked by the sun's rays, stood directly before us.

ENTRANCE TO THE DUNBAR TEMPLE—THIS IS AS FAR AS OUR NATIVE GUIDE (SHOWN IN THE CENTRE) WOULD GO.
From a Photograph.

Passing through its portals, we examined the interior — columns, altar, and all — and returned to the vestibule to gaze upon a huge statue of a woman in bas-relief, over thirty feet in height and probably the finest piece of carving in the whole temple.

Hardly had we reached the foot of the statue when one of the most terrifying shrieks that I have ever heard pierced the interior gloom. My companion started and looked at me, and I in turn shot an inquisitive glance in the direction of our guide. He, however, had departed post-haste, and was even then bounding through the underbrush like a wild buck, yelling and waving his arms frantically.

This, then, was the mysterious noise which had terrified the villagers for so long. That it was produced somewhere and by some-



VESTIBULE OF THE DUNBAR TEMPLE, SHOWING IMAGE OF WOMAN IN RELIEF.
From a Photograph.

thing in the dark interior of that temple everyone knew, but that was all. Few European travellers had ever heard it, and those of the local inhabitants who had done so invariably remembered important engagements and fled the moment it reached their ears.

After we had recaptured our trembling guide and had been taken through several of the other cave-temples, we returned to the entrance of the Dunbar where we had heard the sound, although our cicerone was very reluctant to approach it. Nothing in all India, however, could tempt him to re-enter the place and assist us to investigate. We accordingly approached a small group of villagers who were watching us, and explained to them, as best we could by means of gestures, that we intended to enter the temple and discover the why and the wherefore of this noise, and that we should like them to accompany us. But all in vain. The frightened men showed that they were not particularly infatuated with the idea by deliberately turning their backs on us and taking a hurried departure, jabbering, gesticulating, and casting terrified glances back in our direction. They probably thought we were out of our minds. "It seems as though we shall have to go through with it alone," said my companion. "Never mind, we're going to get to the bottom of the mystery somehow."

ON THE ROOF OF THE DUNBAR TEMPLE.
From a Photograph.

Each of us carried a revolver and plenty of cartridges, so that we felt no fear of human enemies, and we plunged forthwith into the cave. Just as we entered the vestibule of the temple that awful noise sounded once more, echoing and re-echoing through the gloomy vault with startling effect. Although I had heard it before, and was no believer in the supernatural, it made me jump, and I can hardly blame anyone for putting as much cactus-covered mountain-side between himself and that altogether unearthly half-shriek and half-groan as quickly as possible. Such a sound neither of us had heard before, and, after listening intently through its continuance, we were both convinced that it issued neither from man nor wild animal.

Once again we crossed the small courtyard of the great temple, and passed along a narrow hallway into a large square room which we had not visited in our early explorations. From this we groped our way by the aid of candle-light along a dark passage-way, and followed it to the end, in the direction from which we thought the sound had come. Midway down this passage it turned off at an abrupt angle, and as we entered this turn a cool draught put out our light. At that identical moment out of the sudden darkness came again that fearful cry. I must confess that it caused a most uncanny sensation to creep up my spine. What could it be, and what was the secret of these gloomy vaults?

Being assured, from its loudness, that we were now quite near the source of the mysterious sound, and not caring to be taken by surprise, we cautiously crawled along the floor for some distance on our hands and knees, revolvers unholstered and ready for any emergency. Then, as no sound broke the stillness, we stood up again, and by the light of a burning newspaper resumed our explorations.

Soon the narrow passage turned off to the right, then to the left, and we found ourselves in another smaller court. Here, before us, were no fewer than nine openings, and it proved a matter of some conjecture which would be the proper one to enter. In order to lose no time by following the wrong course, and thereby being compelled to retrace our steps, we placed a stone in front of the passage-way through which we had just come, in order to mark it, and sat down to wait for a repetition of the sound.

We did not have to wait very long, however, before our expectations were realized, and soon once more we heard that awful shriek, apparently coming through a certain one of the openings. Being prepared for it, we listened carefully, and noted that it commenced with a hollow sort of gurgle,

and later developed into a well-defined, siren-like wail.

Jumping to my feet, revolver in hand, I lit one of my candles and started through the passage from which we imagined the sound had come. My companion followed. Fifty feet from the entrance we came to two openings. Again we waited for the sound to determine the correct opening to take, and again the shriek was repeated, louder and more awe-inspiring than ever. We followed its direction through one of the openings, slowly picking our way over broken stones and rubbish.

The passage led us eventually to a small room, its high walls covered with carvings in relief, and its ceiling pierced by a small hole, through which shone a shaft of golden light that seemed almost tangible in its solidity.

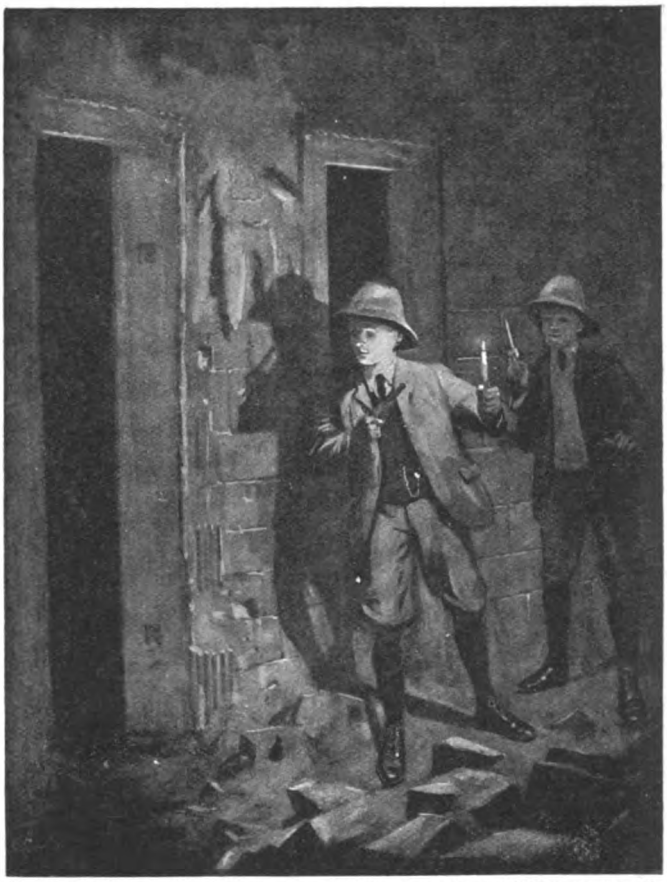
Without pausing to inspect the decorations of the apartment, we crossed it and emerged through a doorway into another courtyard. As we stepped through the door the sound rang out again; this time it seemed almost under our very noses. Now, however, we had become somewhat accustomed to its weirdness, and it no longer chilled our blood, for we were convinced that it was produced neither by man nor beast.

Crossing to the west side of the courtyard we noticed a large hole in the floor, which proved to be a cistern. Before we reached it out of it came the gurgle and shriek —so pronounced and distinct that I was startled beyond words. When it died away I crept cautiously to the edge of the well and peered down. Nothing could be seen, however, and the abyss seemed at first to contain nothing but impenetrable darkness, but soon I detected a faint sound of running water.

Preparing an improvised lantern by tying string to each of the four corners of a note-book and placing a lighted candle in the centre, we lowered it into the cistern. The extent of the cord was almost reached when out of the darkness came that hideous sound. Losing all interest in everything save getting away from the top of the well, I jerked the cord suddenly and over went the candle to the bottom of the pit. By its hissing sputter as it died out we knew that there must be water in the cistern.

Another light was soon rigged up and lowered, and by its rays I could see plainly every part of the cistern, the bottom of which had been filled up with stones, so that only a few inches of water covered them. Down one wall of the pit there extended a long bamboo pipe, and at the opposite side a small hole in the wall served to carry away the water. The modern appearance of this bamboo contrivance interested me not a little, for it seemed strangely out of keeping with its prehistoric surroundings. Undoubtedly it had been placed there recently —perhaps a couple of years at most.

Suddenly the lower end of the pipe commenced to move forward, as though some



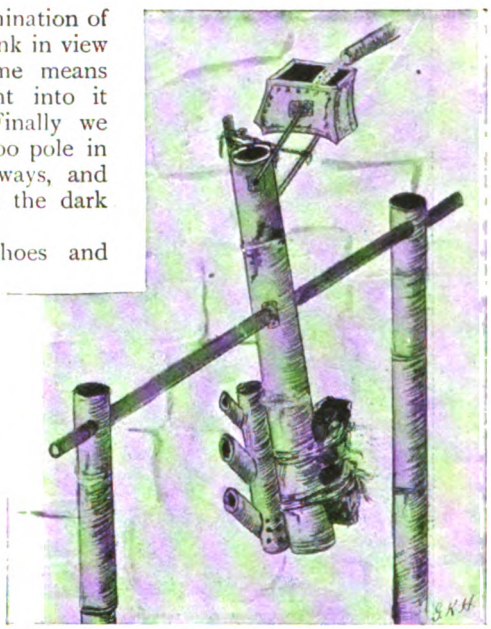
"WE WAITED FOR THE SOUND TO DETERMINE THE CORRECT OPENING TO TAKE."

unseen hand had been extended and was drawing it slowly across the cistern. Farther and farther it moved, and then from out of it, as though by magic, there came a gurgle, a shriek, and a roar in rapid succession! A moment later and the pipe had gained its former position. The ensuing silence was most oppressive.

Here, then, lay the explanation of the mystery! Yet it still presented a problem demanding a threefold solution: What was this apparatus? Who put it there? And for what purpose?

With a closer examination of the interior of the tank in view we searched for some means by which a descent into it could be made. Finally we found a stout bamboo pole in one of the passage-ways, and this we lowered into the dark depths of the well.

Removing my shoes and stockings, I slid down the pole after the fashion of a Japanese acrobat, my companion holding a lighted candle at the top of the cistern and steadying the improvised ladder. Reaching the bottom I found the water to be about seven inches in depth, and almost as cold as ice. I lighted my candle, placed it in a niche in the wall, and beckoned my companion to follow me down the pole.



THE INGENIOUS DEVICE MADE TO PRODUCE THE HIDEOUS SOUND WHICH KEPT THE NATIVES AT A DISTANCE FROM THE WORKSHOP OF THE COUNTERFEITERS.

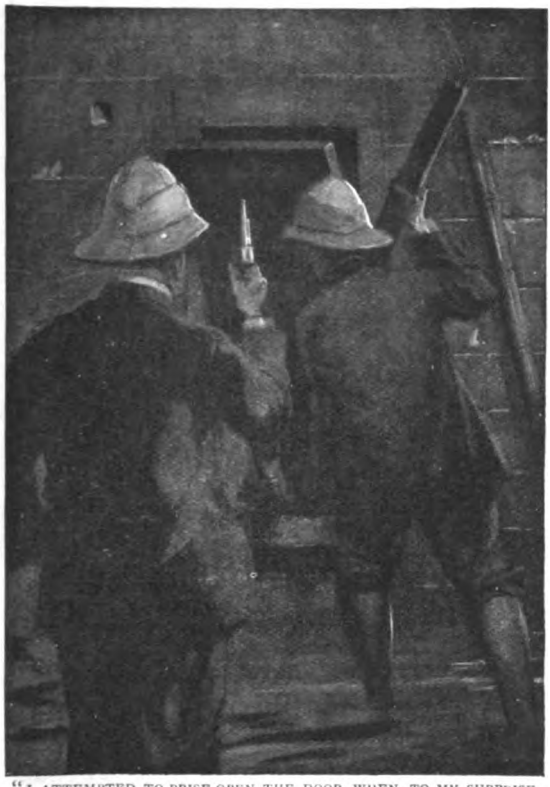
Together we watched from a more advantageous position the movement of the crude contrivance as it produced that hitherto mysterious noise, and it was a matter of only a few moments before we saw through the whole ingenious scheme. Upon examination we found the "shrieker" to be a nicely-adjusted piece of mechanism, composed, for the most part, of a hollow bamboo pole, with its lower end divided into two sections. Into this lower end was inserted a series of pipe whistles. At the top the apparatus was well balanced, and over it hung a box having an opening at the bottom of the side facing the bamboo pipe. Into this box the water dropped from the end of a leaden pipe, which apparently tapped a spring in the hill-side. When the box was full of water the whole thing became over-balanced, the lid of the hole in it opened automatically, and the water poured into the hollow bamboo. During this process the entire apparatus slid down a short incline away from the water-pipe above. The water flowing from the box into the bamboo caused an air pressure, which blew the whistles at the bottom, producing the uncanny noises we had heard. When the water ran out through the whistles, the neat construction of the instrument caused it to regain its natural position, the sound being repeated as soon as the box at the top became filled with water, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

Having discovered "how it worked," we demolished the apparatus in a twinkling, thus silencing for ever the weird wail which was wont to resound through the dark corridors of the temple, and which had so long terrified the natives of the surrounding country.

But for what purpose had this machine been constructed? That was the next question we asked ourselves, and we commenced to look about for some clue which might give us the explanation. The bottom of the cistern in which we stood was about ten feet in diameter, and searching round it we presently discovered a small door in one side. Needless to say, our movements from then onward were most cautiously executed.

My friend stood guard while I tried to open the door, which was covered with a thick plaster resembling earth, only a slight crack being visible in the whole surface. I tried to push the door in, but to no purpose.

Then I tugged and hauled at it, but still it refused to open. Finally I scratched off the plaster, but even then found no clue to the location of its hinge or latch. Picking up a heavy piece of wood that lay near at hand, I attempted to prise open the door, when, to my surprise, it dropped towards me,



"I ATTEMPTED TO PRISE OPEN THE DOOR, WHEN, TO MY SURPRISE, IT DROPPED TOWARDS ME."

working on a centre swing. Anticipating trouble, I grasped my revolver and peered anxiously into the gloomy space beyond the open door. A cold, clammy air beat on our faces, but we could hear no sound.

Passing through the doorway, we discovered, by the dull light of our two candles, that we were in a large room, its only opening being the one through which we had just come.

One glance about us and the tale was told. We had entered the hidden subterranean stronghold of a band of counterfeiters.

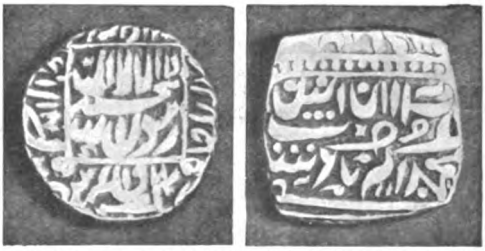
In one corner of the room there were a large furnace and crucibles, tables, and shelves. Lying on the latter we found a complete set of dies, which afterwards proved to have been used to some extent. One of the shelves was strewn with spurious coins of the issue of Akbar the Great, Emperor of Delhi. The genuine coins of this issue are of some value to the collector, and while we were in Bombay the markets were so flooded with them that by the quantity alone their authenticity was doubted. The coins we found here would, no doubt, have been in the Bombay curio stores ere long, for it was a known fact that the counterfeiters were indirectly employed by some of the more unscrupulous coin-dealers. All the pieces we found were of excellent reproduction. The spaces between the characters on the coins had been cleverly filled in with artificial black to make the coin look as if it had been in circulation for a long period, and all of them had been "sweated" — that is, a number of them had been put in a bag and tossed about for an hour or more to wear the rough edges off and dull the characters.

Apart from the few tables and shelves, the place contained no furniture, and it had evidently not been used for some weeks. Probably the band had received a scare of some kind, and were biding their time in the hills, awaiting an opportunity to resume operations.

Carrying a few of the dies and a number of coins, with the bamboo scarecrow, we retraced our steps, well satisfied at having solved what had so long been a baffling mystery. There can be no doubt that the uncanny "shrieker" was the counterfeiters' ingenious method of preventing the public from poking their noses into the temple and possibly stumbling on the workshop of the gang.

COUNTERFEIT COINS OF AKBAR THE GREAT, EMPEROR OF DELHI, TAKEN FROM THE COUNTERFEITERS' WORKSHOP IN THE DUNBAR CAVE AT KANHERI.

As I write this the whistles, now mute, hang upon my wall, after years of faithfully-performed duty as the weird sentinel of the caves of Kanheri.



GENUINE COINS OF AKBAR THE GREAT, EMPEROR OF DELHI.

Caran d'Ache as a Toymaker.

By Beatrice Gardiner.

THE art of Caran d'Ache, most whimsical of caricaturists, most brilliant of military draughtsmen, is well known on this side of the Channel, as, indeed, in most other civilized quarters of the globe. An international reputation is an enviable asset; one, withal, that has stood the test of time and proved itself not ephemeral, but enduring, represents assuredly the consummation of reward for work done. Among contemporary French humorists this artist has long prominently "starred" as a realist, an accurate, if satirical, annotator of the characteristics and foibles of his kind, and particularly of that group that deals in gold braid and waistbelts, rifles, bayonets, and the like.

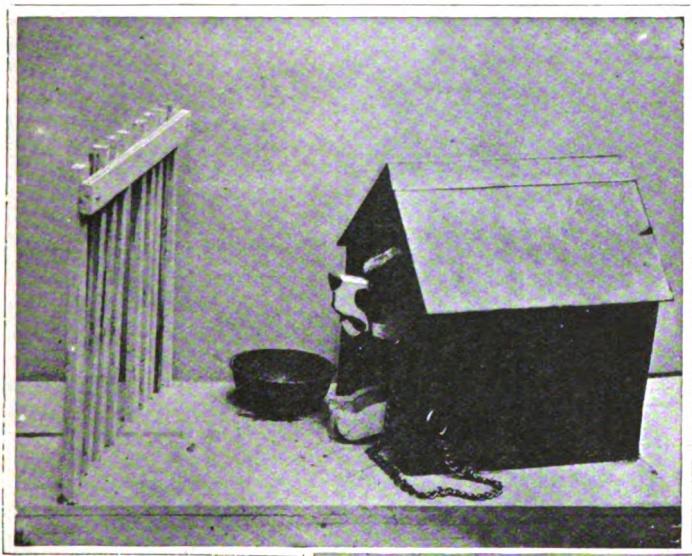
Hitherto, pencil, pen, and brush have served as plastic slaves to his fertile imagination, his extraordinary truth of observation. To-day the celebrated caricaturist brings to bear the same powers of execution, the same dexterous mastery on the production of his wooden toys—objects of so much enthusiastic comment at the recent Salon des Humoristes in Paris.

With a block of wood, a turner's lathe, and such prosaic implements as chisel, saw, and gouge, Caran d'Ache fully maintains the same high standard of craftsmanship as revealed in any of his earlier achievements, and by means of less responsive materials. The artist wood-carver has difficulties as formidable to encounter as the worker in any other branch of the great art of sculpture. Wood-carving as a moral and mental bracer has no superior. There is no more capricious substance than wood; none more productive of uncertainty as the result of attack. Yet, that the craft is worth all the labour and patience its exercise demands, those will testify who have seen the work of Caran d'Ache at the notable exhibition of modern caricature as organized in Paris at the Palais de Glace. And amidst a vast array of talent the attention of critics and public alike has concentrated upon his individual display, and his finely-modelled manikins and animals have been voted the gems of the collection.

It may be a couple of years back that from Caran d'Ache the popular caricaturist evolved Caran d'Ache the wood-sculptor, the maker of toys. To the playthings of childhood he has applied that art which

From a] CARAN D'ACHE AT WORK ON HIS PUPPETS. *[Photograph.*

has made him eminent all the world over. That collectors and connoisseurs wrestle for their possession is merely a side-issue. Caran d'Ache enters the lists as a reformer. He is a bitter foe of the wax doll; he would suppress this tremendous monstrosity as an enemy of childhood, a creator of false idols,

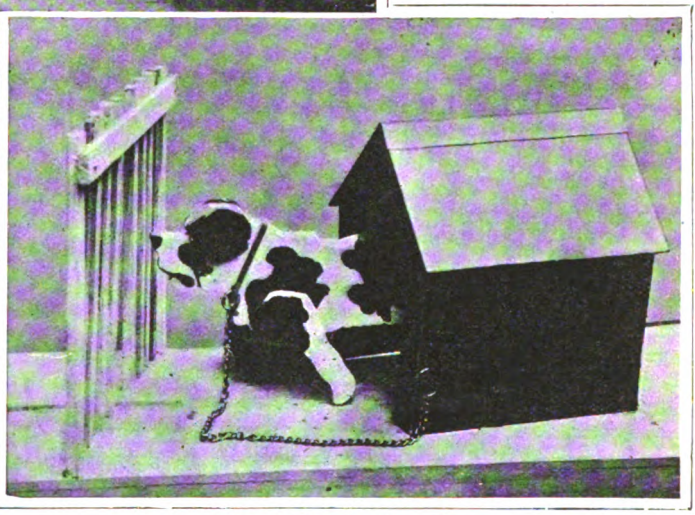


THE WATCH-DOG—ON GUARD.

and with it he would banish into outer darkness its next of kin—the tin soldier.

Despite that man has always had the child with him, its proper development is still a matter of experiment. The professional trainer of the young idea is awakening to the fact that something is wrong somewhere; and so the learned of many nations congregate together now and again, and the question of the scholar and his mental and physical betterment is probed and dissected, but whether the point of disease is ever located remains a dubitable matter. Caran d'Ache traces the damage from the beginning; from those first all-decisive years when the wee human thing takes shape and bulk—when the child is most receptive and readily assimilates. The toy then becomes an important factor in its mental growth. Its playthings resolve themselves into a preparation for the reality that lies beyond, his games an apprenticeship for the business of life. Therefore, the utmost circumspection should go to the choice of toys, in order that they may foster budding intelligence and the love of the true and beautiful, which are synonymous. The tin soldier had its merits; its inventor may be placed among the immortals, since it promoted the patriotic instinct and encouraged the time-honoured traditions of courage and enterprise. But the tin soldier is an anatomical libel on the patriot he counterfeits; he is stiff and inanimate in the most depressing sense of the terms.

Now, the warriors that are wrought by Caran d'Ache are of wood, yet vital. They positively strut upon their stage in their wonderful niche of the



THE WATCH-DOG—IN ACTION.

Palais de Glace. There they are in hundreds—detachments of cavalry, detachments of infantry, with sergeants, corporals, lieutenants, captains, staff officers, and, finally, an august general at their head. Perfectly equipped in every detail, a specialist in the matter of harness, uniform, and arms, the artist-carver has reproduced for us with complete fidelity, not alone the great military types of the

Napoleonic period, with which, as its pictorial chronicler, his name is indelibly associated, but also an entire Teutonic corps on full-dress parade under the leadership of that doughty veteran, General Boum, of the Duchy of Gerolstein, who, mounted on a superbly caparisoned charger, breathes supreme contempt of the Peace Conference and the disarmament of nations.

THE SECOND—WATCHING THE DUEL.

These little *figurini*, some not more than ten inches in length, executed without models, are marvels of creative genius; the heads and limbs are movable, the tinting of face and clothing is elaborate and exact. If he synthetizes in the process of chopping, as is his wont with his drawings, none the less there is amply sufficient detail for the purpose of expression. As there is an astonishing suggestion of movement in the limbs, so by means of slight exaggeration of feature one positively discerns gradations of emotion on the faces of these stupendous puppets.

Of singularly fantastic mould is "Le Répertoire." This tiny showman stands simpering in all his mountebank bravery before an invisible audience, ready with a wave of his willow wand to marshal his characters before the footlights.

Note the ferocious determination of "Le Cosaque"—here surely we have the maximum of expression combined with the maximum of technical execution. This presentment of a Russian soldier of the Premier Empire is instinct with action and bellicose sentiment. So with each unit in the vast company assembled, there is the same precious quality of "atmosphere."

THE SHOWMAN.

Equally admirable is the peacefully-disposed "Second" in the elastic headgear of the Restoration—one of the performers with an obviously heavy thinking part in a drama *en miniature*, whereof the *motif* is a duel, and the leading characters a couple of "Demi-soldes," as were nicknamed the luckless ex-officers of Napoleon's shattered Grande Armée.

Mark, too, his consummate portrayal of animals. We all know his sketches of horses and dogs, and the insight into animal life that these display. Doubtless these prototypes in wood are modelled from earlier "copy," with the necessary effects of light and shade added at discretion. Only long study and familiarity could produce the natural appearance — that is, indeed, the keynote of the entire collection—of such specimens as the watch-dog "Au repos," and the same "En action." As a record of canine attitudes, of inertia and nervous energy, these two models command admiration. The dog is capitally marked and coloured, and the tooling of the coat is done with great skill.

Of other animal types appearing in this complete menagerie must be cited the camel, represented with a characteristically droll exaggeration of all its wonted uncouthness of form, and an extraordinarily conspicuous hump. Its driver shows plenty of local colour.

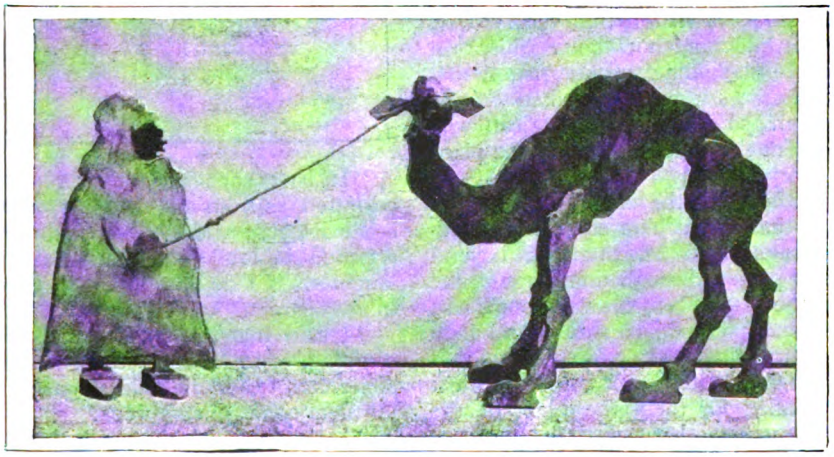
It is certainly not astonishing that *le tout Paris* has run wild over this novel attraction.

There has been keen competition for the acquisition of these exhibits that were specially executed for the Salon des Humoristes, and of which no replicas are extant. A lottery was resorted to, and many foremost art dealers, dilettanti, and fashionables have fought for the prizes.

At this point in the artist's career it is interesting to hark back to the influences that tended to his making. *Par excellence* the soldier's limner, he graduated in the best possible school—a military garrison. The higher authorities there soon discovered his uses as a draughtsman, and set him to work at illustrated inventories of foreign equipment—its similarities and diversities. Thus he acquired a perfect mastery of his subject, and thence resulted the unique series of sketches, posters, and topical and political cartoons that have delighted so large a public. A worshipper at the shrine of Napoleon, Caran d'Ache at one time confined himself almost exclusively to that period and the delineation of the heroes that fought and fell in the Battle of Nations. The fiery Cossack, too, has secured the distinction of much notice from this eclectic caricaturist, who is never unfriendly in his comments. The vast Russian steppes of drear desolation, peopled by the wild spirits begotten of their environment, are dear to him, and his vision of them is always ingenious and personal. Caran d'Ache has many associations with Russia, much of his early youth having been passed there; his name even—a pseudonym, but now of permanent adoption—is borrowed from the Russian vocabulary, and signifies in that language "lead-pencil."

RUSSIAN SOLDIER OF THE FIRST EMPIRE.

The psychological moment when the young artist came into his own may certainly be fixed at that when the curtain rose in the squalid Montmartre theatre, known as the "Chat Noir," on his "Ombres Chinoises," or shadow pictures, when the *mise-en-scène* was represented by a white screen of modest dimensions; the players by silhouettes. "L'Epopée," as this drama founded on the Imperial era was entitled, brought fame to its author and crowds of enthusiastic spectators to Montmartre. This feat was a revelation, and only comparable to its triumph is this most recent manifestation of his versatility at the Salon des Humoristes. The output of his first period is analogous to that of his latest in his minute precision, his close attention to detail, his excellence of technique, which a personal element leavens, and transforms into something that is inimitable.



BEDOUIN AND CAMEL.

THE ENCHANTED CASTLE

BY E. NESBIT.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

CHAPTER XI.

IT was show-day at Yalding Towers, and it seemed good to the children to go and visit Mabel, and, as Gerald put it, to mingle unsuspected with the crowd; to gloat over all the things which they knew, and which the crowd didn't know, about the castle and the sliding panels, the magic ring, and the statues that came alive. Perhaps one of the pleasantest things about magic happenings is the feeling which they give you of knowing a bit that other people not only don't know, but wouldn't, so to speak, believe if they did.

On the white road outside the gates of the castle was a dark spattering of brakes and wagonettes and dog-carts. Three or four waiting motor-cars puffed fatly where they stood, and bicycles sprawled in heaps along the grassy hollow by the red-brick wall. And the people who had been brought to the castle were scattered about the grounds, or being shown over those parts of the castle which were thrown open to visitors.

There were more visitors than usual to-day, because it had somehow been whispered about that Lord Yalding was down and that the holland covers were to be taken off the state furniture, so that a rich American who wished to rent the castle might see the place in all its glory.

All the afternoon the crowd, in its smart holiday clothes, pink blouses and mustard-coloured suits, hats and scarves beyond description, passed through and through the dark hall, the magnificent drawing-rooms and boudoirs, and picture galleries. And high laughter and chattering voices that said nothing which the children wanted to hear —these spoiled for them the quiet of the enchanted castle, and outraged the peace of the garden of enchantments.

"It isn't such a lark after all," Gerald admitted, as from the window of the stone summer-house at the end of the terrace they watched the loud colours and heard the loud laughter. "I do hate to see all these people in *our* garden."

"I said that to that nice bailiff man this morning," said Mabel, settling herself on the stone floor, "and he said it wasn't much to let them come once a week."

"Let's do something with the ring," said Kathleen.

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"Imposs!" said Gerald. "I forgot to tell you—but I met mademoiselle when I went back for my garters—and she's coming to meet us and walk back with us."

"What did you say?"

"I said," said Gerald, deliberately, "that it was very kind of her."

"It may be kind, but it's sickening too," said Mabel; "because now I suppose we shall have to stick here and wait for her, and I promised we'd meet the bailiff man. He's going to bring things in a basket and have a picnic tea with us."

"Where?"

"Beyond the dinosaurus. He said he'd tell me all about the antiddy-something animals—it means before Noah's Ark."

"When?"

"As soon as the gates shut. That's five."

"We might take mademoiselle along," suggested Gerald.

"She'd be too proud to have tea with a bailiff, I expect; you never know how grown-ups will take the simplest thing." It was Kathleen who said this.

"Well, I'll tell you what," said Gerald, lazily turning on the stone bench. "You all go along and meet your bailiff. A picnic's a picnic. And I'll wait for mademoiselle."

Mabel remarked joyously that this was jolly decent of Gerald, to which he modestly replied, "Oh, rot!"

Jimmy added that Gerald rather liked sucking-up to people.

"Little boys don't understand diplomacy," said Gerald, calmly; "sucking-up is simply silly. But it's better to be good than pretty, and——"

"How do you know?" Jimmy asked.

"And," his brother went on, "you never know when a grown-up may come in useful. Besides, they *like* it. You must give them *some* little pleasures. Think how awful it must be to feel old. My hat!"

"I hope *I* sha'n't be an old maid," said Kathleen.

"I don't *mean* to be," said Mabel, briskly. "I'd rather marry a travelling tinker."

"It would be rather nice," Kathleen mused, "to marry the Gipsy King, and go about in a caravan telling fortunes and hung round with baskets and brooms."

"Oh, if I could choose," said Mabel, "of course, I'd marry a brigand, and live in his mountain fastnesses and be kind to his captives and help them to escape and——"

"You'll be a great help to your husband," said Gerald.

"Yes," said Kathleen; "or a sailor would be nice. You'd watch for his ship coming home and set the lamp in the dormer window to light him home through the storm; and when he was drowned at sea you'd be most frightfully sorry, and go every day to lay flowers on his daisied grave."

"Yes," Mabel hastened to say; "or a soldier, and then you'd go to the wars with short petticoats and a cocked hat and a barrel round your neck like a St. Bernard's dog. There's a picture of a soldier's wife on a song auntie's got. It's called 'The Veevandyare.'"

"When I marry," Kathleen quickly said——

"When *I* marry," said Gerald, "I'll marry a dumb girl—or else get the ring to make her so that she can't speak unless she's spoken to. Let's have a squint."

He applied his eye to the stone lattice.

"They're moving off," he said. "Those pink and purple hats are nodding off in the distant prospect; and a funny little man with a beard like a goat is going a different way from everyone else—the gardeners will have to head him off. I don't see mademoiselle, though. The rest of you had better bunk. It doesn't do to run any risks with picnics.'

Coming out of that cool, shadowy summer-house into the sunshine was like stepping into an oven, and the stone of the terrace was burning to the children's feet.

"I know now what a cat on hot bricks feels like,' said Jimmy.

The antediluvian animals are set in a beech wood on a slope at least half a mile across the park from the castle. The grandfather of the present Lord Yalding had them set there in the middle of last century, in the great days of the late Prince Consort, the Exhibition of 1851, Sir Joseph Paxton, and the Crystal Palace. Their stone flanks, their wide, ungainly wings, their lozenged, crocodile-like backs show grey through the trees a long way off.

Kathleen, Mabel, and Jimmy got hotter and hotter, and went more and more slowly. They had almost reached that stage of resentment and discomfort when one "wishes one hadn't come," before they saw, below the edge of the beech wood, the white waved handkerchief of the bailiff.

That banner, eloquent of tea, shade, and being able to sit down, put new heart into them. They mended their pace, and a final desperate run landed them among the drifted coppery leaves and bare grey and green roots of the beech wood.

"Oh, glory!" said Jimmy, throwing himself down. "How do you do?"

The bailiff looked very nice, the girls thought. He was not wearing his velveteens, but a grey flannel suit that an earl need not have scorned; his straw hat would have done no discredit to a duke, and a prince could not have worn a prettier green tie. He welcomed the children warmly. And there were two baskets dumped, heavy and promising, among the beech leaves.

He was a man of tact. The hot, instructive tour of the stone antediluvians which had loomed with ever-lessening charm before the children was not even mentioned.

"You must be desert-dry," he said, "and you'll be hungry, too, when you've done being thirsty. I put on the kettle as soon as I discerned the form of my fair romancer in the extreme offing."

The kettle introduced itself with puffings and bubblings from the hollow between two grey roots, where it sat on a spirit-lamp.

"Take off your shoes and stockings, won't you?" said the bailiff, in matter-of-course tones, just as old ladies ask each other to take off their bonnets; "there's a little baby canal just over the ridge; you could go and paddle."

"THE JOYS OF PADDLING IN COOL RUNNING WATER AFTER A HOT WALK HAVE YET TO BE DESCRIBED."

The joys of paddling in cool running water after a hot walk have yet to be described. I could write pages about them.

There was a mill-stream when I was young, with little fishes in it and dropped leaves that spun round, and willows and alders that leaned over it and kept it cool, and—but this is not the story of *my* life.

When they came back, on rested, damp, pink feet, tea was made and poured out—delicious tea, with as much milk as ever you wanted out of a beer-bottle with a screw top. And cakes and gingerbread and plums, and a big melon with a lump of ice in its heart. A tea for the gods!

This thought must have come to Jimmy, for he said suddenly, removing his face from inside a wide-bitten crescent of melon-rind:—

"Your feast's as good as the feast of the Immortals, almost."

"Explain your recondite allusion," said the grey-flannelled host; and Jimmy, understanding him to say, "What do you mean?" replied with the whole tale of that wonderful night when the statues came alive, and a banquet of unearthly splendour and deliciousness was plucked by marble hands from the trees of the lake island.

When he had done the bailiff said:—

"Did you get all this out of a book?"

"No," said Jimmy; "it happened."

"You are an imaginative set of young dreamers, aren't you?" the bailiff asked, handing the plums to Kathleen, who smiled, friendly but embarrassed. Why couldn't Jimmy have held his tongue?

"No, we're not," said that indiscreet one, obstinately; "everything I've told you *did* happen."

The bailiff looked a little uncomfortable. "All right, old chap," he said. And there was a short, uneasy silence.

"Look here," said Jimmy, who seemed for once to have got the bit between his teeth, "do you believe me or not?"

"Don't be silly, Jimmy," Kathleen whispered.

"Because, if you don't, I'll *make* you believe."

"Don't," said Mabel and Kathleen together.

"Do you or don't you?" Jimmy insisted, lying on his front with his chin on his hands, his elbows on a moss-cushion, and his bare legs kicking among the beech leaves.

"I think you tell adventures awfully well," said the bailiff, cautiously.

"Very well," said Jimmy, abruptly sitting up, "you don't believe me. Nonsense, Cathy; he's a gentleman, even if he is a bailiff."

"Thank you," said the bailiff, with eyes that twinkled.

"You won't tell, will you?" Jimmy urged.

"Tell what?"

"*Anything.*"

"Certainly not. I am, as you say, the soul of honour."

"Then—Cathy, give me the ring."

"Oh, *no!*" said the girls together.

Kathleen did not mean to give up the ring—Mabel did not mean that she should; Jimmy certainly used no force. Yet presently he held it in his hand. It was his hour. There are times like that for all of us, when what we say shall be done *is* done.

"Now," said Jimmy, "this is the ring Mabel told you about. I say it is a wishing ring. And if you will put it on your hand and wish, whatever you wish will happen."

"Must I wish out loud?"

"Yes; I think so."

"Don't wish for anything silly," said Kathleen, making the best of the situation, "like its being fine on Tuesday, or its being your favourite pudding for dinner to-morrow. Wish for something you really want."

"I will," said the bailiff. "I'll wish for the only thing I really want. I wish my—I wish my friend were here."

The three who knew the power of the ring looked round to see the bailiff's friend appear—a surprised man that friend would be, they thought, and perhaps a frightened one. They had all risen, and stood ready to soothe and reassure the new-comer. But no startled gentleman appeared in the wood. Only, coming quietly through the dappled sun and shadow under the beech trees were mademoiselle and Gerald; mademoiselle in a white gown, looking quite nice and like a picture; Gerald hot and polite.

"COMING QUIETLY THROUGH THE DAPPLED SUN AND SHADOW UNDER THE BEECH TREES WERE MADEMOISELLE AND GERALD."

"Good afternoon," said that dauntless leader of forlorn hopes. "I persuaded mademoiselle——"

That sentence was never finished, for the bailiff and the French governess were looking at each other with the eyes of tired travellers who find, quite without expecting it, the desired end of a very long journey. And the children saw that even if they spoke it would not make any difference.

"*You!*" said the bailiff.

"Mais—c'est donc vous," said mademoiselle, in a funny, choky voice.

And they stood still and looked at each other—"like stuck pigs," as Jimmy said later—for quite a long time.

"Is *she* your friend?" Jimmy asked.

"Yes; oh, yes," said the bailiff. "You are my friend, are you not?"

"But yes," mademoiselle said, softly. "I am your friend."

"There! you see," said Jimmy, "the ring *does* do what I said."

"We won't quarrel about that," said the bailiff. "You can say it's the ring. For me—it's a coincidence—the happiest, the dearest——"

"Then you . . .?" said the French governess.

"Of course," said the bailiff. "Jimmy, give your brother some tea. Mademoiselle, come and walk in the woods; there are a thousand things to say."

"Eat then, my Gerald," said mademoiselle, now grown astonishingly young and like a fairy princess. "I return at the hour and we re-enter together. It is that we must speak ourselves. It is long that we have not seen us, me and Lord Yalding."

"So he was Lord Yalding all the time," said Jimmy, breaking a stupefied silence as the white gown and the grey flannels disappeared among the beech-trunks. "Landscape-painter sort of dodge—silly, I call it. And fancy her being a friend of his, and his wishing she were here! Different from us, eh? Good old ring!"

"His friend?" said Mabel, with strong scorn. "Don't you see she's his lover? Don't you see she's the lady that was bricked up in the convent, because he was so poor, and he couldn't find her? And now the ring's made them live happy ever after. I *am* glad. Aren't you, Cathy?"

"Rather," said Kathleen. "It's as good as marrying a sailor or a bandit."

"It's the ring did it," said Jimmy.

"May I trouble you for the melon?" said Gerald. "Thanks. Why didn't we know he was Lord Yalding? Apes and moles that we were!"

"*I've* known since last night," said Mabel, calmly, "only I promised not to tell. I *can* keep a secret, can't I?"

"Too jolly well," grumbled Kathleen.

"He was disguised as a bailiff," said Jimmy; "that's why we didn't know."

"Disguised as a fiddle-stick-end," said Gerald. "Ha, ha! I see something old Sherlock Holmes never saw. Nor that idiot Watson, either. If you want a really impenetrable disguise you ought to disguise yourself as what you really are. I'll remember that."

"It's like Mabel telling things so that you can't believe them," said Cathy.

"I think mademoiselle's jolly lucky," said Mabel.

"*Shes* not so bad either. He might have done worse," said Gerald. "Plums, please!"

There was quite plainly magic at work. Mademoiselle next morning was a changed governess. Her cheeks were pink, her lips were red, her eyes were larger and brighter, and she had done her hair in an entirely new way, rather frivolous and very becoming.

"Mamselle's coming out," Eliza remarked.

Immediately after breakfast Lord Yalding called with a wagonette that wore a smart blue cloth coat, and was drawn by two horses whose coats were brown and shining, and fitted them even better than the blue cloth coat fitted the wagonette, and the whole party drove in state and splendour to Yalding Towers.

Arrived there, the children clamoured for permission to explore the castle thoroughly, a thing that had never yet been possible. Lord Yalding, a little absent in manner, but yet quite cordial, consented. Mabel showed the others all the secret doors and unlikely passages and stairs that she had discovered.

It was as they emerged from the little rickety secret staircase that led from the powdering-room of the state suite to the gallery of the hall that they came suddenly face to face with the odd little man with the beard like a goat who had taken the wrong turning yesterday.

"This part of the castle is private," said Mabel, with great presence of mind, and shut the door behind her.

"I am aware of it," said the goat-faced stranger, "but I have the permission of the Earl of Yalding to examine the house at my leisure."

"Oh!" said Mabel. "I beg your pardon. We all do. We didn't know."

"You are relatives of his lordship, I surmise?" asked the goat-faced one.

"Not exactly," said Gerald. "Friends."

The gentleman was thin, and very neatly dressed; he had small, merry eyes, and a face that was brown and dry-looking.

"You are playing some game, I should suppose?"

"No, sir," said Gerald; "only exploring."

"May a stranger propose himself as a member of your exploring expedition?" asked the gentleman, smiling a tight but kind smile.

The children looked at each other.

"You see," said Gerald—"it's rather difficult to explain—but you see what I mean, don't you?"

"He means," said Jimmy, "that we can't take you into an exploring party without we know what you want to go for."

"Are you a photographer?" asked Mabel, "or is it some newspaper's sent you to write about the Towers?"

"I understand your position," said the gentleman. "I am not a photographer, nor am I engaged by any journal. I am a man of independent means, travelling in this country with the intention of renting a residence. My name is Jefferson D. Conway."

"Oh!" said Mabel; "then you're the American millionaire?"

"I do not like the description, young lady," said Mr. Jefferson D. Conway. "I am an American citizen, and I am not without means. This is a fine property—a very fine property. If it were for sale——"

"It isn't. It can't be," Mabel hastened to explain. "The lawyers have put it in a tale so Lord Yalding can't sell it. But you could take it to live in, and pay Lord Yalding a good millionairish rent; and then he could marry the French governess——"

"Shish!" said Kathleen and Mr. Jefferson D. Conway together, and he added:—

"Lead the way, please; and I should suggest that the exploration be complete and exhaustive."

Thus encouraged, Mabel led the millionaire through all the castle. He seemed pleased, yet disappointed, too.

"It is a fine mansion," he said at last, when they had come back to the point from which they had started, "but I should suppose, in a house this size, there would mostly be a secret stairway, or a priest's hiding-place, or a ghost."

"There are," said Mabel, briefly; "but I thought Americans didn't believe in anything but machinery and newspapers." She touched the spring of the panel behind her, and displayed the little tottery staircase to the American. The sight of it worked a wonderful transformation in him. He became eager, alert, very keen.

"HE BECAME EAGER, ALERT, VERY KEEN."

"Say!" he cried, over and over again, standing in the door that led from the powdering-room to the state bedchamber. "But this is great! Great!"

The hopes of everyone ran high. It seemed almost certain that the castle would be let for a millionairish rent, and Lord Yalding be made affluent to the point of marriage.

"If there were a ghost located in this ancestral pile I'd close with the Earl of Yalding to-day, now, on the nail," Mr. Jefferson D. Conway went on.

"If you were to stay till to-morrow, and sleep in this room, I expect you'd see the ghost," said Mabel.

"There *is* a ghost located here, then?" he said, joyously.

"They say," Mabel answered, "that old Sir Rupert, who lost his head in Henry VIII.'s time, walks of a night here, with his head under his arm. But we've not seen that.

What we have seen is the lady in a pink dress with diamonds in her hair. She carries a lighted taper," Mabel hastily added. The others, now suddenly aware of Mabel's plan, hastened to assure the American in accents of earnest truth that they had all seen the lady with the pink gown.

He looked at them with half-closed eyes that twinkled.

"Well," he said, "I calculate to ask the Earl of Yalding to permit me to pass a night in his ancestral best bedchamber. And if I hear so much as a phantom footstep, or hear so much as a ghostly sigh, I'll take the place."

"I *am* glad," said Cathy.

"You appear to be very certain of your ghost," said the American, still fixing them with little eyes that shone. "Let me tell you, young gentlemen, that I carry a gun, and when I see a ghost I shoot."

He pulled a pistol out of his hip-pocket, and looked at it lovingly.

"And I am a fair average shot," he went on, walking across the shiny floor of the state bedchamber to the open window. "See that big red rose, like a tea-saucer?"

They saw.

The next moment a loud report broke the stillness, and the red petals of the shattered rose strewed balustrade and terrace.

The American looked from one child to another. Every face was perfectly white.

"Jefferson D. Conway made his little pile by strict attention to business, and keeping his eyes skinned," he added. "Thank you for all your kindness."

"Suppose you'd done it, and he'd shot you," said Jimmy, cheerfully. "That *would* have been an adventure, wouldn't it?"

"I'm going to do it still," said Mabel, pale and defiant. "Let's find Lord Yalding and get the ring back."

Lord Yalding had had an interview with Mabel's aunt, and lunch for six was laid in the great dark hall, among the armour and the oak furniture—a beautiful lunch, served on silver dishes. Mademoiselle, becoming every moment younger and more like a princess, was moved to tears when Gerald rose, lemonade-glass in hand, and proposed the health of "Lord and Lady Yalding."

When Lord Yalding had returned thanks in a speech full of agreeable jokes, the moment seemed to Gerald propitious, and he said:—

"The ring, you know! You don't believe in it—but we do. May we have it back?"

And he got it.

Then, after a hasty council, held in the panelled jewel-room, Mabel said: "This is a wishing-ring, and I wish all the American's weapons of all sorts were here."

Instantly the room was full, six feet up the wall, of a tangle and mass of weapons—swords, spears, arrows, tomahawks, fowling-pieces, blunderbusses, pistols, revolvers, scimitars, creeses—every kind of weapon you can think of; and the four children, wedged in among all these instruments of death, hardly dared to breathe.

"He collects arms, I expect," said Gerald. "Wish them back where they came from, Mabel, for goodness' sake, and try again."

Mabel wished the weapons away, and at once the four children stood safe in a bare panelled room.

"No," Mabel said, "I can't stand it. We'll work the ghost another way. I wish the American may think he sees a ghost when he goes to bed. Sir Rupert with his head under his arm will do."

"Is it to-night he sleeps there?"

"I don't know. I wish he may see Sir Rupert every night—that'll make it all serene."

"It's rather dull," said Gerald; "we sha'n't know whether he's seen Sir Rupert or not."

"We shall know in the morning, when he takes the house."

This being settled, Mabel's aunt was found to be desirous of Mabel's company; so the others went home.

It was when they were at supper that Lord Yalding suddenly appeared, and said:—

"Mr. Jefferson Conway wants you boys to spend the night with him in the state chamber. I've had beds put up. You don't mind, do you? He seems to think you've got some idea of playing ghost-tricks on him."

It was difficult to refuse; so difficult that it proved impossible.

Ten o'clock found the boys each in a narrow white bed, that looked quite absurdly small in that high, dark chamber, and in face of that tall, gaunt four-poster hung with tapestry and ornamented with funereal-looking plumes.

"I hope to goodness there isn't a *real* ghost," Jimmy whispered.

"Not likely," Gerald whispered back.

"But I don't want to see Sir Rupert's ghost with its head under its arm," Jimmy insisted.

"You won't. The most you'll see'll be the millionaire seeing it. Mabel said *he* was to see it, not *us*. Very likely you'll sleep all night and not see anything. Shut your eyes and count up to a million. Don't be a goat."

But he was reckoning without Mabel and the ring. As soon as Mabel had learned from her drab-haired aunt that this was indeed the night when Mr. Jefferson D. Conway would sleep at the castle she had hastened to add a wish "that Sir Rupert and his head may appear to-night in the state bedroom." She unfortunately omitted to say who Sir Rupert and his head were to appear to.

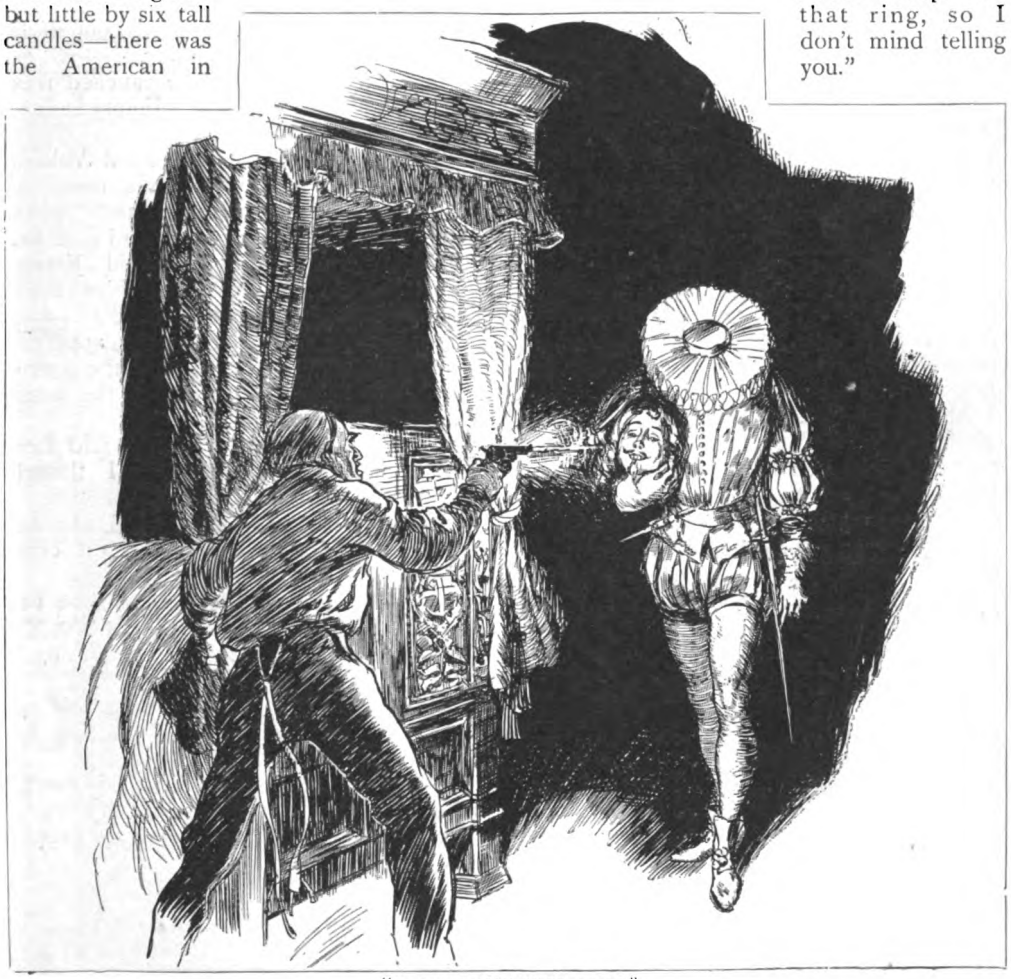
Jimmy shut his eyes and began to count a million. Before he had counted it he fell asleep. So did his brother.

They were awakened by the loud, echoing bang of a pistol-shot. Each thought of the shot that had been fired that morning, and opened eyes that expected to see a sunshiny terrace, and red rose-petals strewn upon warm white stone.

Instead, there was the dark, lofty state chamber — lighted but little by six tall candles—there was the American in shirt and trousers, a smoking pistol in his hand —and there, advancing from the door of the powdering-room, a figure in doublet and hose, a ruff round its neck, and no head. The head, sure enough, was there; but it was under the right arm, held close in the slashed-velvet sleeve of the doublet. The face looking from under the arm wore a pleasant smile. Both boys, I am sorry to say, screamed. The American fired again. The bullet passed through Sir Rupert, who advanced without appearing to notice it.

Then, suddenly, the lights went out. The next thing the boys knew it was morning. A grey daylight shone blankly through the tall windows, and wild rain was beating upon the glass. And the American was gone.

"Where are we?" said Jimmy, sitting up with tangled hair and looking round him. "Oh, I remember. Ugh—it was horrid. I'm about fed-up with that ring, so I don't mind telling you."



"THE AMERICAN FIRED AGAIN."

"Nonsense," said Gerald. "I enjoyed it. I wasn't a bit frightened; were you?"

"No," said Jimmy; "of course I wasn't."

"We've done the trick," said Gerald, later, when they learned that the American had breakfasted early with Lord Yalding and taken the first train to London; "he's gone to get rid of his other house and take this one. The old ring's beginning to do really useful things."

"Perhaps you'll believe in the ring now," said Jimmy to Lord Yalding, whom he met later on in the picture gallery; "it's all our doing that Mr. Jefferson saw the ghost. He told us he'd take the house if he saw a ghost, so of course we took care he did see one."

"Oh, you did, did you?" said Lord Yalding, in rather an odd voice. "I'm very much obliged, I'm sure."

"Don't mention it," said Jimmy, kindly. "I thought you'd be pleased. And him too."

"Perhaps you'll be interested to learn," said Lord Yalding, putting his hands in his pockets and staring down at Jimmy, "that Mr. Jefferson D. Conway was so pleased with your ghost that he got me out of bed at six o'clock this morning to talk about it."

"Oh, ripping!" said Jimmy. "What did he say?"

"He said, as far as I can remember," said Lord Yalding, still in the same strange voice —"he said, 'My lord, your ancestral pile is A1. It is, in fact, The Limit. Its luxury is palatial; its grounds are nothing short of Edenesque. No expense has been spared, I should surmise. Your ancestors were whole-hoggers. They have done the thing as it should be done. Every detail attended to. I like your tapestry, and I like your oak, and I like your secret stairs. But I think your ancestors should have left well enough alone, and stopped at that.' So I said they had, as far as I knew, and he shook his head, and said:—

"'No, sir. Your ancestors take the air of a night with their heads under their arms. A ghost that sighed, or glided, or rustled I could have stood, and thanked you for it, and considered it in the rent. But a ghost that bullets go through while it stands grinning, with a bare neck and its head loose under its own arm, and little boys screaming and fainting in their beds—No. What I say is, "If this is a British hereditary, high-toned family ghost, excuse *me*."' And he went off by the early train."

"I say!" the stricken Jimmy remarked, "I *am* sorry; and I don't think we did faint, really I don't—but we thought it would be just what you wanted. And perhaps someone else will take the house."

"I don't know anyone else rich enough," said Lord Yalding. "Mr. Conway came the day before he said he would, or you'd never have got hold of him. And I don't know how you did it, and I don't want to know. It was a rather silly trick."

There was a gloomy pause. The rain beat against the long windows.

"I say," Jimmy looked up at Lord Yalding with the light of a new idea on his round face. "I say, if you're hard up, why don't you sell your jewels?"

"I haven't any jewels, you meddlesome young duffer," said Lord Yalding, quite crossly; and, taking his hands out of his pockets, he began to walk away.

"I mean the ones in the panelled room with the stars in the ceiling," Jimmy insisted, following him.

"There aren't any," said Lord Yalding, shortly; "and if this is some more ring nonsense I advise you to be careful, young man. I've had about as much as I care for."

"It's *not* ring nonsense," said Jimmy; "there are shelves and shelves of family beautiful jewels. You can sell them and——"

"Oh, *no*," cried mademoiselle, appearing like an oleograph of a duchess in the door of the picture gallery; "don't sell the family jewels——"

"There are'n't any, my lady," said Lord Yalding, going towards her. "I thought you were never coming."

'Oh, aren't there?" said Mabel, who had followed mademoiselle. "You just come and see."

"Let us see what they wish to show us," cried mademoiselle, for Lord Yalding did not move; "it should at least be amusing."

"It is," said Jimmy.

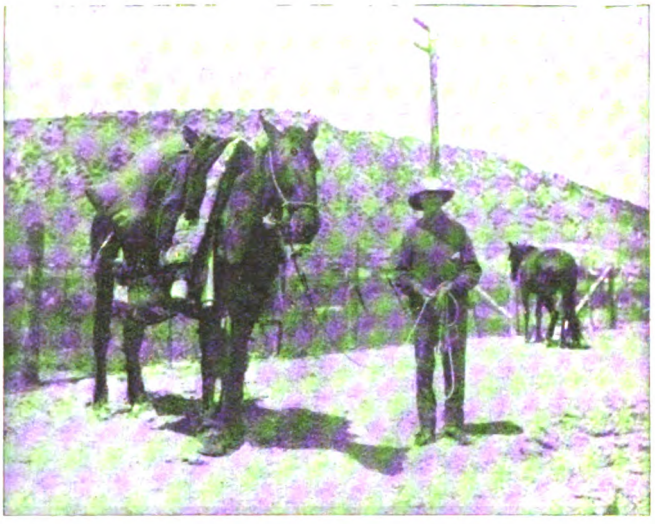
So they went, Mabel and Jimmy leading, while mademoiselle and Lord Yalding followed, hand in hand.

"It's much safer to walk hand in hand," said Lord Yalding; "with these children at large one never knows what may happen next."

(*To be concluded.*)

From Other Magazines.

A CASE OF HARD LUCK.



THE accompanying photograph can be appropriately labelled "A Case of Hard Luck." The old man in the photograph, sixty-five years of age, was once a fairly prosperous ranchman. Becoming almost helpless through rheumatism, he saw all that he had gathered by years of hard work and hardships gradually disappear. When ten dollars and the lame horse seen in the picture were all that he had left in the world he started to walk to some hot springs, some hundred and fifty miles away. With his bed and his food on his lame horse the two literally crawled over the roads of the sage-brush deserts, deep with sand and alkali dust. When the photograph was taken the old man's food and his money were gone, and he was starting again into the deserts in search of some ranch where he might obtain employment as a sheep-herder. — "THE WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE."

"WHOA, FITZGERALD!"

AN Irish drill-sergeant was instructing some recruits in the mysteries of marching movements, and found great difficulty in getting a countryman of his to halt when the command was given. After explaining and illustrating several times, he approached the recruit, looked at him silently for a couple of minutes, then demanded his name. "Fitzgerald, sorr," was the reply. "Did you ever drive a donkey, Fitz?" "Yes, sorr." "What did you say when you wished him to stop?" "Whoa!" The sergeant turned away and immediately put his squad in motion. After the men had advanced a dozen yards or so he shouted with all his strength, "Squad, halt! Whoa, Fitzgerald!"—"TIT-BITS."

A YOUNG CUCKOO IN A ROBIN'S NEST.

A CORRESPONDENT of "Country Life," who sends the photograph given below, says of it: "The enclosed photograph, unique of its kind, of a young cuckoo found in a robin's nest, may be of interest to your readers. The nest was built in an old disused water-can, wedged between two branches of a yew tree in Bedford Cemetery. It is a fine healthy bird, about the size of a full-grown thrush, with grey feathers tipped with light brown, and, though so young, it is quite vicious when approached."

A FIFTY-POUND STROKE AT GOLF.

ON one occasion when I was playing with a Captain Broughton, who lived at St. Andrews, a notable incident happened at the seventh or high hole of our old course. I was badly bunkered there, and had made two or three unsuccessful attempts to dislodge my ball. "Pick up your ball, Tom; it's no use," called out the captain. I replied that I would try once more, as I might hole it, to which the captain answered, "If you do, I'll give you fifty pounds." I had another stroke. How, in the name of all that is wonderful, it happened, I cannot tell, but out of the bunker and into the hole the ball went, while the captain walked on with a serious face. He, however, turned up next day with the fifty pounds, but, of course, I would not take it, as the whole affair was more or less of a joke.—TOM MORRIS, IN "THE GRAND MAGAZINE."

HOSPITALITY OF SPANISH PEASANTS.

THIS delay was very opportune, for it gave us a chance of seeing how truly hospitable Spanish peasants in these parts can be. No sooner had the ever-passing string of mule-cart drivers found we were fixtures for half an hour or so than they proceeded to bring us out wine in flasks and skins, with glasses to drink it out of. Fancy English peasants (if there are such folk) obliging foreign motorists like this. We gave one of the ringleaders a run into Tortosa, and never was a man more delighted and frightened at the same time. He wasted about fifty matches trying to light his cigarette before all the tobacco blew out of it—Spanish cigarettes are not gummed, but rolled round and held together. He yelled and waved at all his friends and acquaintances, and invited us all to drink sherry with him.—"FRY'S MAGAZINE."

CURIOSITIES.

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

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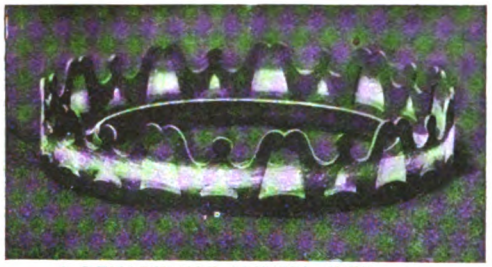


A REMARKABLE SPIDER'S WEB.

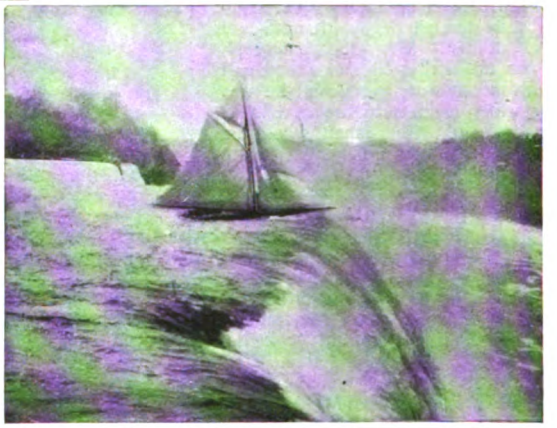
HERE is a photograph, taken by myself, of a web spun by a spider around the shade-holder of an incandescent gas-burner. For the purpose of giving better detail, the part shown was detached from the complete burner. It would be interesting to know the length of the web, which you will notice is coiled so regularly.—Mr. A. H. Hardy, 34, Falmer Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield.

A FANCY DRESS "TIT-BIT."

THE accompanying photograph shows Miss Olive B. Griffiths in a fancy costume made entirely from *Tit-Bits* covers, which won the first prize in a recent fancy dress carnival held at Ramsbottom in aid of local charities. The dress, which looked very tasteful, consisted of as many as thirty covers of the well-known weekly sewn together, and was admired by the judges. Although Miss Griffiths rode a considerable distance on her machine, the costume maintained its shape throughout, even the delicate paper folds shown in the picture remaining in place.—The Rev. Chas. Griffiths, Canfield House, Ramsbottom, Lancs. Photo. by G. Haworth.

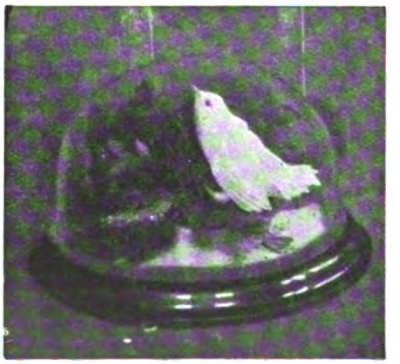
ALMOST A TRAGEDY.

I SEND you a photograph of the yacht *Surprise*, of Detroit, to all appearances about to make a plunge over the American Falls at Niagara. The dark spot in the river below, and showing nearly under the jib-boom, is the steamer *Maid of the Mist*. It is needless for me to say how this picture was produced, as the "trick" is an old one, the photograph of the yacht having been taken on Lake St. Clair. The owner of the yacht is Mr. Chas. Boston, of Detroit, and the two photographs were taken by Mr. Robert Craft, of the same city.—Mr. Geo. W. Nütz, 829, De Kalb Avenue, Brooklyn, New York.



A WHITE ROBIN.

I SEND you a photograph of a white robin captured at Gerrard's Cross Common last May. A workman caught this *rara avis* and took it to the Packhorse Inn, Gerrard's Cross, the proprietor of which tried to keep the bird in captivity. The poor little thing died shortly afterwards, however, and its body was sent to a taxidermist, with the result shown in the picture.—Mr. R. M. Colston, The School House, Gerrard's Cross, Bucks.



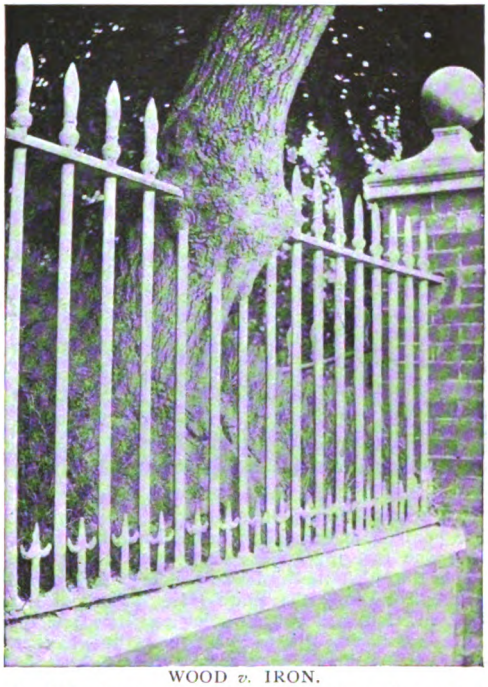
"A."

A PAPER-BAG BALLOON.

IT may not be generally known that in every tissue-paper bag, as supplied by venders of sweets, etc., lies a potential fire-balloon. To demonstrate this fact, fully inflate a small paper bag with air and stand it upright as in photograph A, with its corners pinched up horizontally and overhanging, apply a match to both these corners, lighting one as quickly as possible after the other, and await developments. The flame should pursue a fairly even course to the lower segment of the bag, leaving behind it a shell of very light ash; this shell will become inflated with the superheated gases of combustion, and, possibly assisted by the upward currents of warm air, will become converted into a very efficient fire-balloon, and will ascend several yards. B and C show the balloon "leaving the earth" and "in the air" respectively.—Mr. F. Knott, Mentone, Ditchling, Sussex.

"B."

"C."

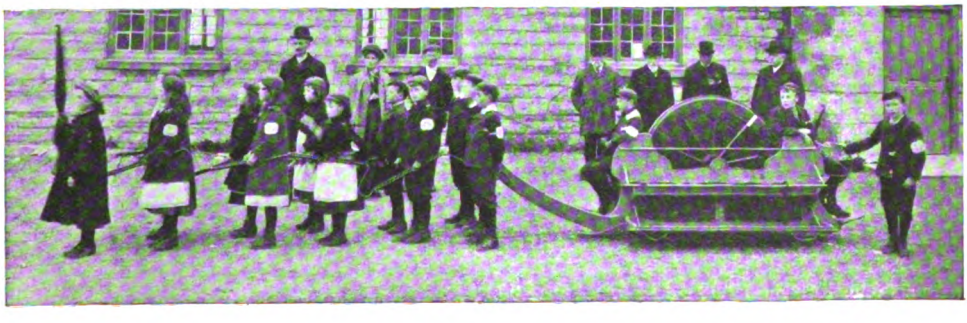


WOOD *v.* IRON.

MY picture shows a curious tree to be seen at Shirley, near Birmingham, on one of the main roads. It grows in the front garden of a large house and has forced its way right through the iron railings. Three of the spikes are completely embedded in the trunk of the tree. Many hundreds of people pass the place every day, but very few notice this curiosity.—Mr. G. C. Wilson, 49, Green Lane, Small Heath, Birmingham.

A NEW TOY FOR CHILDREN.

THIS vehicle is the invention of Mr. P. A. Williams, Meliden, Prestatyn, North Wales, and is peculiar in that it has but one large central wheel, the motive power being supplied by a team of boys and girls hitched to a shaft or pushing bar. A dozen passengers, including driver and guard, can be accommodated, and one of the features claimed for the conveyance is its safety, the children being but a few inches from the ground. The "coach" has to be correctly balanced, and is provided with "skids" on either side. It has proved a source of great enjoyment to the school-children in the village. The inventor is the second figure from the right, and the photograph was taken by Mr. J. Burrows, Prestatyn.—Mr. J. W. Williams, Woodbine, Prestatyn, N.W.



ANOTHER QUEER NESTING-PLACE.

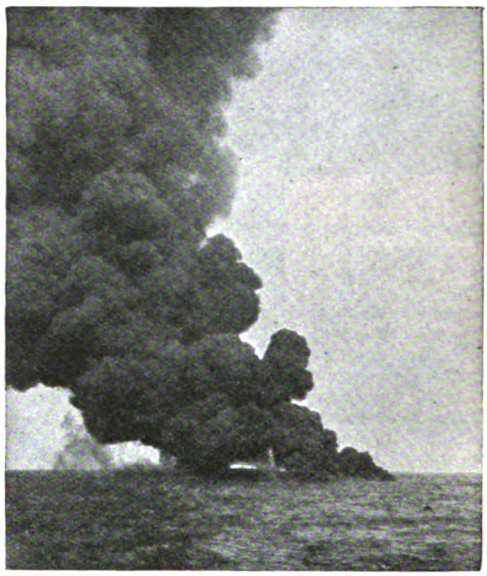
MY photograph is that of the nest of a thrush built at the side of a blacksmith's furnace, only one foot from the blazing fire. During the whole time that the bird was building, sitting, and rearing her young the smith (Mr. Malkin, of Lea Bridge, Salop) had his fire going regularly, and the sparks were flying all around the plucky little mother. —Mr. M. A. Wood, The Studios, Wem, Salop.

A NOVEL USE FOR OLD "TOPPERS."

I SEND you a photograph of my window-box, which consists of five old and disused top-hats. Having procured the hats, I first painted them with Brunswick black, and then glued them over, to give them a shiny appearance. The insides are painted with grey lead to keep out insects. At the bottom of each hat there is a hole to let the water drain away, and I am pleased to say that the plants are very flourishing.—S.

A TRAGEDY OF THE SEA.

ON the 7th of May I was bound across the Bay of Biscay for St. Nazaire in a steamer. At 8 a.m. we sighted some smoke as from a vessel on fire. We put on all possible speed and gradually made out that the smoke came from a vessel on fire. We got right up to her a few minutes before noon, and found that there was nobody alive on board. We stopped by her until noon, when she threw her stern and went down head first. The benzine (with which she was loaded) continued to burn as it rose to the surface. Her name was the *Silverlip*, belonging to Messrs. Samuels and Co., of London. We found out afterwards that she took fire on May 1st, when all



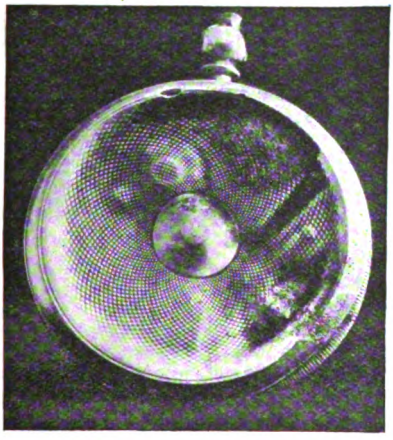
the crew left and were picked up an hour or so afterwards by the ss. *Westgate*. I enclose photo., which was taken just before she disappeared.—Mr. Arnold C. B. Groom, Reculver, Herne Bay, Kent.

AN INDOOR SNOWSTORM.

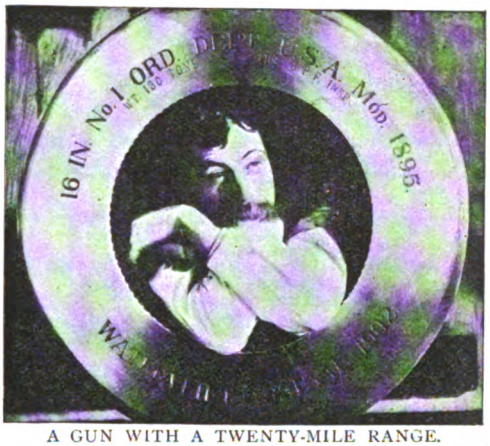
THIS is the representation of an indoor snowstorm, photographed on a table indoors by gaslight. The figures of men and dog are bits of pottery. The snow consists of castor sugar, the house is cut out of cardboard, and the fence is made of garden sticks tacked together, while the trees are branches from the garden.—Miss S. E. Watkins, 78, Dowling Street, Dunedin, New Zealand.

WHAT THE LIGHTNING DID.

THE remarkable photographs reproduced here are of a watch worn by a man who was struck dead by lightning. The plate to which the enamel of the dial was attached is of copper, and the lightning playing on this for a fraction of a second converted it into an electro-magnet of enormous power. It attracted the two back-plates toward it with such force as to crush the impress of the works right through the inner plate on to the outer. In one place a hole has actually been pierced through the silver. The jewels, which would be non-conductors, have been violently wrenched out of their



sockets, while the brass-work of the watch is considerably twisted. The front glass was, of course, splintered into a thousand pieces, and the enamel of the face was nearly all cracked off, so that the figures III, IV, and V are the only ones visible. The hour-hand has disappeared altogether, and part only of the minute-hand points at nineteen minutes past the hour of twelve (noon), for it was then that the awful thing occurred. The seconds-hand is quite intact, and registers exactly forty-five seconds. A similar relic lies preserved in a case in Lynn Museum. It belonged to a man who was killed in a thunderstorm forty-seven years ago.—Mr. Arthur H. Hallas, Station Street, Spalding, Lincs.

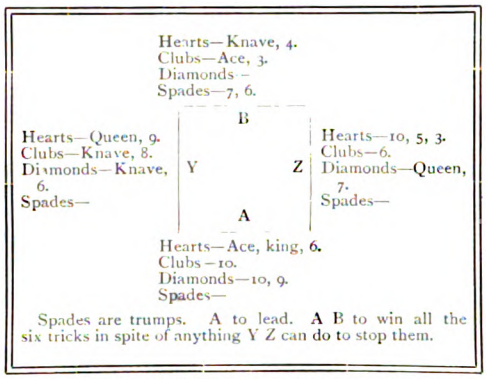


A GUN WITH A TWENTY-MILE RANGE.

A CANNON large enough for a man to crawl into and lie in must be of huge size. It is a fact that the gun shown in this picture has such a large bore that a workman was able to crawl inside, being photographed while looking out at the muzzle. This is the largest and most powerful gun ever made in the United States, and weighed no less than 130 tons when it was completed. It is mounted at the entrance of New York Bay, and can throw a projectile a distance of twenty miles.—Mr. D. Allen Willey, Baltimore.

ICICLES IN AFRICA.

DURING the night of the 5th of June we had a very severe frost which caused a water-pipe to burst. The leakage in the pipe took place at the back of a plum tree, the spring of water from the damaged pipe falling on the branches thereof and freezing in the process. The icicles thus formed were from four to five inches in circumference, and some were four feet long!—Mr. S. R. Proudman, Kalanga Street, Indwe, Cape Colony.



A BEAUTIFUL BRIDGE PROBLEM—SOLUTION.

THE solution of this six-card problem given in our last number—and repeated above—is as follows :—

TRICK 1. A, king hearts ; Y, 9 hearts ; B, jack hearts ; Z, 3 hearts.

(B throws the jack on the king, so that if Y afterwards discards the queen of hearts A will be left with the tenace over Z.)

TRICK 2. A, 9 diamonds ; Y, 6 diamonds ; B, 6 spades ; Z, 7 diamonds.

TRICK 3. B, 7 spades ; Z, 6 clubs ; A, 10 clubs ; Y, jack diamonds.

(Z's discard is obvious, but Y is in difficulties. If he discards the 8 of clubs B will make the 3 of clubs ; if the queen of hearts, A will make two tricks in hearts.)

TRICK 4. B, ace clubs.

(Z is now in a predicament. Whichever suit he throws away A will retain, and will either make both hearts or the ace of hearts and the 10 of diamonds.)

STRANGE RETRIEVERS.

HERE are some novel shooting dogs that we have in Uruguay, South America. The fox is a great pet and goes everywhere with the dogs and cat. I found him when about ten days old and gave him to the terrier in the foreground, who forthwith adopted him and proved a most devoted foster-mother. Both the fox and cat come as soon as they hear a shot fired, in the hope of getting a bird. It is a funny sight to see them following the gun. —Miss Alda Fitz-Herbert, Estancia Media Agna, Palmitas, F. C. O., Uruguay.

A PIEBALD SQUIRREL.

THIS is a photograph of a black and white squirrel which was shot a short time ago in the Val d'Anniviers, near Sierre. Needless to add, it is a very rare specimen.—Mr. C. Zufferey, La Combrez, Montana, Switzerland.

GROWN FROM SEED FOUND IN A MUMMY.

THE pea-blossoms illustrated here have been grown in a garden near Guildford, from seed found in an Egyptian mummy. In spite of the great age of the seed when sown, it took root readily and grew to the height of nearly four feet before showing signs of flowering. The flowers are pale pink with a deep rose centre, quite scentless, and growing in a close cluster at the head of the pea-stalks, gradually becoming looser as the flowering continues. The whole plant closely resembles the ordinary edible variety of pea, but it is of much larger habit, the stalks being exceptionally thick and succulent. The glass contains only one pea-stalk, all the flowers and leaves growing on the same thick stem.—Mr. C. W. H. Foord, 11, Riverview Gardens Barnes, S.W.

IN the article on Ambidexterity that appeared in our July number due acknowledgment was given for the illustrations to Mr. J. Jackson's standard work on the subject. Mr. Jackson has since informed us that the writer of the article was also very largely indebted to the letterpress of his book, and we have much pleasure in making this additional announcement.

"THE THREE SISTERS."
(Lady Elcho, Mrs. Adeane, and Lady Tennant.)

By J. S. SARGENT, R.A.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxxiv. NOVEMBER, 1907. No. 203.

Present-Day Painters of Beautiful Women.

BEFORE the advent of Mr. Sargent the art of portraiture in England had been for some years under an eclipse. The greatest painters devoted themselves in the main to subject pictures, and the England of Reynolds and Gainsborough had no contemporary equal to Carolus Duran and Benjamin Constant in France. With Mr. Sargent came a revival of former glories, more particularly as regards women, to

THE HON. MRS. MARSHALL BROOKS. By SIR LUKE FILDES, R.A.

whose presentment on canvas he has devoted himself ever since his student days.

"The Three Sisters," a striking example of Mr. Sargent's work reproduced in these pages, was *the* picture of the year in 1900, the first time for a long period that portraiture had achieved such a success over all the resources of imagination and romance. The success was not wholly due to the skill of the artist; some of it must be attributed to the personality of "The Three Sisters" themselves—Lady Elcho, Mrs. Adeane, and Mrs. (now Lady) Tennant. Mr. Sargent had previously shown the technical skill he possesses to the point of genius in other ladies' portraits at the Royal Academy. But this skill had never before been applied to so much charm of feature and grace of manner. There is a marked difference of years in these three daughters of the Hon. Percy Wyndham, but there is a sisterly likeness in beauty which gives harmony without monotony to the work of the painter.

"How can I tell?" replied Sir Joshua Reynolds, when he was asked how some part of his "Infant Hercules" had been painted. "There are a dozen pictures under this." Mr. Sargent's method of painting a portrait is as thorough, although quite different from that of Sir Joshua. He never "paints out," but puts another canvas on his easel and starts afresh when anything in his work displeases him. The number of "false starts" he thus makes is sometimes disconcerting to a sitter who can see no tangible result of two or three sittings, and probably never guesses that it is the difficulty of catching some passing, yet very characteristic, expression of a woman's face which is the cause of the apparent failure. Once a beginning has really been made, however, the painter's rapid use of his brush soon makes up for what the lady would probably describe as "lost time." The pearls, for example, in "The Three Sisters" were each the result of only a single touch and the critics declared that never had pearls been so well painted. Mr. Sargent, indeed, paints at such high pressure that in the course of a two or three hours' sitting several breaks of a few minutes are needed—even more needed by the artist than by the sitter, tired by the effort to maintain one posture. He usually spends these brief intervals at the pianoforte, music having for the painter in the midst of work the value of both a sedative and a tonic.

"The Three Sisters," it may be added, was commissioned by the ladies' father, the Hon. Percy Wyndham, in whose house, Clouds, near Salisbury, it now hangs. Clouds is frequently the scene of week-end parties of distinguished politicians and others, and of its art treasures none presents to them a more attractive interest.

It is beauty of girlhood, rather than of womanhood, that Mr. J. J. Shannon has depicted in his portrait of Lady Marjorie Manners, daughter of the Duchess of Rutland. When she was Marchioness of Granby, some years since, Mr. Shannon painted a portrait of the young lady's mother, but it is hardly recalled by the present picture, so different are they in pose and colouring. He always takes great pains with the pose of his sitters, and usually tries on his canvas the effect of several poses before he is convinced that he has discovered the best. As a rule, a "Shannon" portrait is the result of about thirty sittings of two hours each, and he has had as many as fifty. Almost at the eleventh hour, so to speak, he will sometimes make a complete change in the scheme of a portrait.

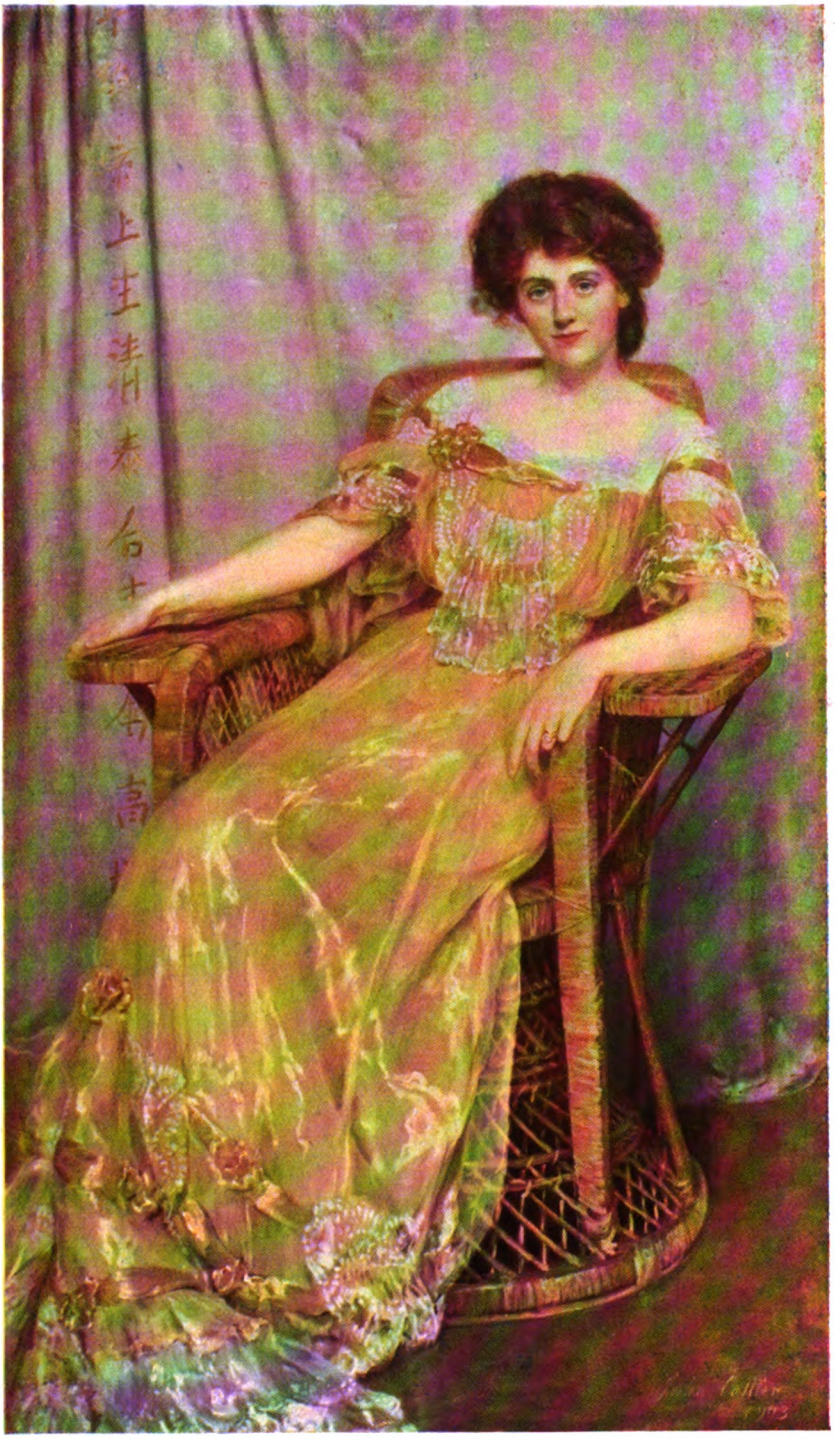
Lady Marjorie Manners's portrait can have presented no problem of pose or colouring: it looks a straightforward piece of work from start to finish. But in the case of ladies of a less simple type of beauty a portrait has sometimes seen strange vicissitudes. Mr. Shannon had almost finished the portrait of a young lady in evening dress. One day as she came into his studio in Holland Park Road his Persian cat met her on the staircase, and she playfully took it into her arms. As she entered the room Mr. Shannon exclaimed: "That is how you ought to be painted!" There was the effect which he had been striving for. He destroyed the almost finished portrait, although it had cost nearly fifty sittings, and painted another of the lady with the cat in her arms.

Several artists have transmitted to canvas the impressive features of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, but the only picture which lives in the memory is that now hanging in the Arts Club, London, with the signature of Mr. Solomon J. Solomon. It is some years—fourteen, to be exact—since it was painted, when "Mrs. Pat," as her many admirers love to call her, was in the heyday of her stage career with the title-part in Pinero's play, "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray." It was in that character, indeed, at a critical moment in the play, that the artist chose to paint her. Mr. Solomon had made a reputation with "Niobe," "Samson and Delilah," and other daring classical subjects, but was not known as a portrait painter. One evening he went

LADY MARJORIE MANNERS. By J. J. SHANNON, A.R.A.

MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL. By S. J. SOLOMON, R.A.

(By permission of the Committee of the Arts Club.)



MRS. ANTHONY HOPE HAWKINS. By THE HON. JOHN COLLIER.

THE COUNTESS OF CLONMELL. By ELLIS ROBERTS.

to the theatre to see "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," and was so taken with the artistic effect of Mrs. Patrick Campbell's appearance in one of the scenes that he exclaimed to his companion, "How I should like to paint her just as she is now!" The remark somehow reached the ears of Mr. Pinero, and through him it was arranged that the picture should be painted. So Mr. Solomon had a miniature stage fitted up at the studio he then worked in at St. John's Wood, with footlights and scenic properties, in order that the play-picture should be exactly reproduced.

"Mrs. Patrick Campbell was a splendid sitter," said Mr. Solomon, in giving this account of the picture, "but was rather capricious, I remember, in keeping her appointments, which is apt to be a failing with ladies, sometimes to the hindrance of a painter's work. And the portrait was finished rather hurriedly because Mr. Campbell, the poor fellow, since killed in South Africa, came home after an absence of nine years. The picture was painted entirely by gas-light, although I corrected faults of colour by daylight." The portrait, it may be added, was painted in ten or twelve sittings, each sitting extending to about three hours.

The portraits of the Hon. Mrs. Marshall Brooks and Mrs. Anthony Hope Hawkins are by artists who are famous for subject pictures. Both Sir Luke Fildes and the Hon. John Collier, however, have had many and distinguished sitters. To the painter of "The Doctor," indeed, has been given the honour of executing portraits of the King and Queen and the Prince and Princess of Wales. He has painted the Hon. Mrs. Marshall Brooks, who is the wife of a son of Lord Crawshaw, in a style he has much favoured for women's portraits—head and shoulders in an oval frame. Sir Luke Fildes did not paint his first portrait till 1887, after his election as a Royal Academician, the subject being his wife. Of the many ladies' portraits he has since painted, that of Mrs. Marshall Brooks is probably the most successful.

The Hon. John Collier has painted many more men than women, and mostly men, too, of intellectual distinction, such as the late Professor Huxley and Mr. Rudyard Kipling. Some of these men's portraits have been very much admired, but in painting the wife of "Anthony Hope" he has certainly shown that, given a congenial subject, he can be no less happy in delineating the charms of femininity than the powers of intellect. Mrs. "Anthony Hope," who is the daughter of a New York gentleman, was married to the novelist in 1903, and her portrait was painted by Mr. Collier about two years ago.

"The Countess of Clonmell" is the work of an artist who has made quite a career of the painting of lovely women. Lady Clonmell is one of the majority of the most beautiful women in London society during the past few years who have sat to Mr. Ellis Roberts, the list including in addition the Duchess of Leinster, the Duchess of Sutherland, Lady Chesterfield, Lady Dalkeith, and Lady Evelyn Mason. In contrast with this brilliant record Mr. Roberts's artistic beginnings were of the humblest. He was a painter on pottery at Minton's Staffordshire works until the winning of a scholarship of thirty pounds a year enabled him, with rigid economy, to obtain two years' training at South Kensington. At South Kensington he was fortunate enough to secure a travelling studentship—and his talents did the rest.

Mr. Ellis Roberts painted Lady Clonmell only a few months ago. But it is safe to say that ten years hence it will look as fresh and "up-to-date" as it does to-day. At any rate, this much is true of ladies' portraits which came from his easel ten years ago. The secret is in Mr. Roberts's care as to the dress worn by his subjects. He induces them, if possible, to give him *carte blanche*, and having *carte blanche* he is careful to exclude from the costume any distinctive feature which would serve in the course of a short time to put a date to the picture. A lady may feel inclined at first to rebel against such a decree; she would prefer to be arrayed in all the latest fashion. But when it is tactfully explained to her what the consequences may be she gladly yields the point, the more readily if she is at all sensitive to the lapse of time—and what woman is not? The devising of an attractive dress with these limitations may be full of difficulties, but in Lady Clonmell's case, as in others, Mr. Ellis Roberts, with the co-operation doubtless of his fair sitters, has most successfully overcome them. Mr. Roberts's artistic gifts are beyond all question. But it is possible that the high favour in which he is held by the ladies may be partly attributed to his circumspection in this matter of clothes, in contrast as it is with the glaring indiscretion shown by some of the most distinguished artists.

The Scarlet Runner.

XII.—THE ADVENTURE OF CHRISTOPHER AND THE CHAUFFEUSE.

By C. N. and A. M. Williamson,

Authors of "The Lightning Conductor," "My Friend the Chauffeur," etc.

CHRISTOPHER and his uncle had just been to look at the cars that were to start next day in the great "freak race," as the coming event was popularly called, and for which Scarlet Runner was already entered—at the important relative's request.

The Royal Automobile Club, under whose auspices the race was to be run, had taken temporarily a big new garage to house the competitors, and ever since early morning, when the cars had begun to assemble and to put themselves on view, devotees of motoring had been pouring in and out. Everyone was interested, for not only was a well-known millionaire offering a ten-thousand-pound prize and several cups for the encouragement of originality among inventors, but most of the motors themselves were worth seeing. As for the old man who held Christopher Race's destiny in his hand, as the driver of a car holds his steering-wheel, he was interested for several reasons, though his interest had come as a surprise to Christopher.

Now he was talking excitedly as they walked together into the big white and red and gold restaurant near the garage, which for the last day or two had been practically given over to the motoring world, and where he was to be his nephew's guest at luncheon.

"Well, Chris," he said, as they sat down at the table Christopher had engaged, "you win that first prize and there's nothing of mine you can't have, now or in future. It isn't so much the money I'm keen on for you, though it would be a tidy little sum for you to add to the allowance I mean to make you again, until I'm gone and you come into the lot."

Christopher laughed. "Aren't you giving yourself away a bit, uncle? You weren't going to let me know my fate until next month, when the year of probation will be up."

"It was you who set the limit and made the stipulation," the elder man reminded the younger, watching the champagne as it bubbled into his glass. "You've been pretty plucky this last year, and shown that you've good stuff in you—better stuff than I thought

"YOU WIN THAT FIRST PRIZE AND THERE'S NOTHING OF MINE YOU CAN'T HAVE, NOW OR IN FUTURE."

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when you were fooling your time away and running into debt. I've been pleased with you; I don't mind saying I've been proud of you once or twice. Instead of disgracing our name, as I was afraid you were going to do at first, hiring yourself to Tom, Dick, and Harry as a paid chauffeur, you've brought some credit to it. Whatever happens, now that you've proved what you're made of I sha'n't leave you penniless. As things have fallen out, you won't have to wait till the 1st of January to learn as much as that from me. I intend to restore your old allowance, not because you need it, but because you *don't* need it. That's where you deserve credit. Also, I shall certainly leave you something in my will; enough to secure you the same income you enjoyed through me up to eleven months ago, and will now begin to enjoy again—that is, eight hundred a year. But I want you to show the world that you're something more than a good chauffeur and the owner of a handsome red car—or a second-rate amateur detective. I want you to show that you're the best there is, and that Scarlet Runner's the same kind. Win this prize, my boy, win it, and I shall say, 'Here's my successor—a young man who's done something for the world to talk of, and done it alone.'"

"First prize it must be? Second or third won't do?" Christopher wanted to know.

"Decidedly not. Worse than nothing!" protested his uncle. "Think of your name: 'Race.' A man with that name, if he *does* go in for a thing, must win the best there is, or lose all. What puns they could make on you if you failed!"

Before Christopher could reassure him, even if he had felt inclined to do so, a man who had been about to pass the table turned at sound of the excited voice, stopped abruptly, and came back a step or two.

"How do you do?" he asked, speaking to both men, but putting out his hand to the elder.

It was Sir John Maverick, ardent motorist, millionaire proprietor of the *Man on the Car*, and—the organizer of the freak race. He knew Christopher only slightly, having met him a few times at the Automobile Club; but his father, the late baronet, had been a great friend of Christopher's uncle, and young Sir John—who had not seen the old man for some years—had memories of him in early boyhood.

Old Mr. Race was delighted at the meeting, as much for his nephew's sake as his own, for he felt vaguely that it would be a good thing for Christopher to know this important person. He remembered his dead friend's son instantly, for Sir John, though he was some years older than Christopher, had one of those faces which remain always boyish.

"Sit down and have some lunch with us," suggested Mr. Race, as if he were the host, for he was sure that Christopher, as a competitor for Sir John Maverick's big prize, would not trade upon a slight acquaintance to give such an invitation.

The millionaire accepted without demur, saying that a friend whom he had asked had failed him, and he had thought himself doomed to eat alone. The last course was reproduced for the new-comer's benefit, and talk was, of course, all about the race which would begin to-morrow morning.

Sir John spoke freely of his object, which was to encourage inventors. He had, he said, made the first prize one worth winning, otherwise good men would not have thought it worth while to risk building cars for the competition. Many inventors who were too poor to exploit their ideas unaided would be able to get themselves financed by people who would hope to share the ten thousand pounds; and as the big plum ought to fall to the car combining the most original with the most practical ideas, a result extraordinarily interesting should be worked out from this thousand-mile reliability race.

They had not got to any discussion of Christopher's car when the old man found that he was in danger of making himself late for an engagement. Had he and his nephew finished their luncheon alone, the meal would have been cut short to suit his plans, but the arrival of the unexpected guest had made a difference. Mr. Race was obliged to excuse himself before the coffee and liqueurs, but he insisted that luncheon must not be curtailed by the others, and hurried away almost before the two he had left behind could rise from the table.

The table was near the entrance, therefore Christopher had to take only a few steps to see his uncle as far as the door. As Mr. Race went out, two ladies came in, passing by the old man and the young one apparently without a glance. But if they did not pay the smallest attention to him, Mr. Race was seized with the most lively and compelling interest in one or both of them. He started, stared, and peered through his gold-rimmed eye-glasses, his lips, just parted for a last word with Christopher, remaining open.

"THE OLD MAN STOOD LOST IN ADMIRATION."

Even when the two ladies had passed and their backs were turned to him the old man stood lost in admiration or emotion of some sort, while Christopher looked at him in surprise. His uncle, during his knowledge of him, had always posed as more or less of a woman-hater.

"What's the matter, uncle?" asked the young man, with rather a humorous light in his eyes. "You seem rather struck."

"Lord bless my soul!" exclaimed the old man. And with no other answer, and not so much as a glance for his nephew, whose very existence he seemed to have forgotten, Mr. Race marched out of the restaurant, looking like one who has seen a ghost.

Sir John Maverick, at the table, smiled as Christopher came back. He had caught the expression in his old friend's face and in the eyes that peered at the two beautiful women from behind their glass windows.

"I didn't know Mr. Race was a ladies' man in these days," he said. "But that couple are attractive enough to make one of Diogenes."

"I shouldn't have thought even they would have that effect on such a hardened old cynic as my uncle," said Christopher.

"I remember my father saying that Mr. Race had had a great disappointment in love as a young, or a fairly young, man," remarked Sir John, "and that it was quite a romance."

"I never heard of it," returned Christopher. "Anyhow, neither of these ladies is nearly old enough to have been the heroine of such an episode. One is a girl, and the other can't be much over thirty."

"The girl I never saw before," said Sir John, "but the woman I know by sight, and I suppose you do. No? Why, it's Madame du Guesclin, the famous French sportswoman. She can drive a racing motor like—like a demon or an angel. A very handsome woman, but can't quite go into the same class with the girl, eh?"

"They're just sitting down at the table behind you," murmured Christopher, in a low, warning tone. "Apparently there was a misunderstanding about some other table they thought they'd engaged, and they've come back to the only one in the room that isn't."

"Madame has probably run over to see the 'freaks,' and the start to-morrow," said Sir John, dropping his voice, "but I thought the girl looked English. I suppose they have friends who are competing. By the way, if it isn't indiscreet to ask, what particularly novel features has your car? Of course, I've heard of some of your exploits with her, but

I got the idea that she was neither more nor less than an exceptionally good touring car; and she must be a year old, isn't she? Or are you coming in with something newer?"

"No, it's my Scarlet Runner," answered Christopher. "My uncle persuaded me to enter for the race. I shouldn't have thought of it myself, but he's tremendously keen—rather to my surprise; makes a great point of it." Then Christopher went on to explain the originality of Scarlet Runner's system of transmission: the compressed oil-drive to turbines on the back axle. He told how he had made the acquaintance of the young inventor, who was too poor to experiment upon a grand scale on his own account; how the compressed oil-drive had well repaid him for the money spent, and how there had from the first been only one difficulty. Owing to its compression by the force-pump, the oil became too hot and lost some of its consistency, but—Christopher went on to say—he had suggested that the whole mechanism should be water-jacketed. The inventor had agreed, the thing had just been done, and would, Christopher thought, prove a triumphant success.

"I mean to try and touch your money," he finished, laughing. "I've had a look round among the 'freaks' in that Zoo across the way this morning, and though Scarlet Runner isn't, perhaps, in her first youth, and can't flatter herself that she's a monstrosity, she's as sweet a 'runner' as she is scarlet, and the proportion of engine-power she manages to transmit to the road-wheels is so enormous that I have the highest hopes for her."

"Well, I wish you luck, I'm sure," said Sir John Maverick; "but if I were a competitor I think I should be a bit shy of the freak that, from all accounts, out-freaks everything else."

"What, the gyroscopic freak?" inquired Christopher, a suspicion of a sneer in his voice.

As he asked this question the two ladies who had lately come in turned quickly, as if on an impulse, and looked round for the first time. They had both taken seats on the same side of their table, with their backs to that at which sat Sir John Maverick and Christopher Race. In thus turning, they could not see Sir John's face, if they had not happened to notice it before, but they could obtain a full view of Christopher. He, however, being now deeply interested in the conversation with his companion, missed the sudden slight flutter at the adjoining table. He was looking straight at Sir John, and had not the vaguest idea that a pair of large and beautiful grey eyes had given out a flash in quick response to that veiled sneer of his.

"The gyroscopic freak," echoed Maverick. "It's just on the cards that that particular freak is going to revolutionize automobilism. I would not care to bet high against it."

"I wouldn't care to bet high on it," laughed Christopher. "There *will* be a monstrosity, if you like, judging from what one hears. But it doesn't look as if the gyroscope would 'gyre' to-morrow."

"You mean because the thing isn't with the lot in the garage?"

"Yes. If it were ready it would be there, getting all the preliminary 'ad.' that was to be got."

"You think old Dick Herbert won't run his car?"

"I should think it's premature to call it a car. My idea is that it's proved a big disappointment."

"I wonder. Poor old chap! It won't be the first he's had."

"No. He came a cropper over that other invention of his," said Christopher, "the compressed-air engine that was so cracked up in the halfpenny papers."

"If he comes another cropper, so much the better for your Scarlet Runner. One rival the less. But do you know Herbert? I never saw him myself, he's lived so much abroad; but I have friends who've met him, and say he's rather a fine old fellow."

"His is a mere name to me," answered Christopher, "associated only with the failure of the compressed-air business; so, naturally, I don't expect much now. And if he's old, he may well funk to-morrow."

There was a sudden brisk movement at the next table, so brisk that it attracted Christopher's attention. The younger of the two ladies had twisted round in her chair, sitting with her arm flung over the back, her flushed face turned upon her surprised neighbour.

"He funks nothing," she said, in a low but intensely angry tone. "It's sheer jealousy which makes you talk like that. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. It's disgusting. To call your sneers at a brilliant inventor and his invention bad taste would be too mild."

"Dorothy!" protested handsome Madame du Guesclin, with her charming French accent. But the girl, flaming in beauty and rage, like a wind-blown poppy, would not listen.

"'BEWARE OF THE MONSTROSITY TO-MORROW,' SHE WENT ON, HER VOICE QUIVERING."

"Beware of the monstrosity to-morrow," she went on, her voice quivering. "Like a monster, it may devour you and all your self-conceit. When you're swallowed up, when you're just simply *nowhere*, perhaps you'll be sorry for speaking as you have of a man like Richard Herbert behind his back."

Christopher was overwhelmed by the torrent of her wrath, and, vexed as he was at having inadvertently given offence to such a beautiful young creature, he was half-inclined to laugh in the midst of his astonishment, so extraordinary, so almost childish was her tirade.

"I am indeed sorry," he ventured, "to have unintentionally distressed you."

"You have not 'distressed' me," broke in the girl. "You wouldn't have the power to do that. You have annoyed me, for I hate jealousy and injustice, and I felt bound to protest—that's all."

"Allow me to say that I think you exaggerate my offence," pleaded Christopher. "I said nothing——"

"You call it 'nothing'!"

"Nothing against Mr. Herbert or his invention, and would not have dreamed of doing so. If you can recall what I did say I believe you would have to admit that, as you proclaim yourself a friend of justice. But I don't ask you to admit anything. On the contrary, I apologize for my indiscretion in expressing any doubts whatever of any invention, without stopping to think that the absent inventor might have present friends."

As he made this apology, worded with a spice of boyish malice, to which he was tempted by the fury of the girl's onslaught, Christopher's eyes twinkled a little, though his face was perfectly grave and expressive of regret. That twinkle was as the glitter on the last drop of water in an overflowing cup. The girl gave him an indignant look from her great eyes, and, without deigning to bandy further recriminations, turned a well-shaped and slender back upon him.

Her companion asked the waiter for the bill, and three minutes later both ladies had trailed their graceful frocks out of the restaurant.

Sir John Maverick laughed, and so did Christopher; nevertheless the latter was far from happy. He was a little amused, for his sense of humour insisted on being heard, but he was more angry than amused. He felt as if the girl had boxed his ears, and, though he laughed and talked with Sir John, they still tingled.

The great freak race was to start from Regent's Park, and finish, after a roundabout thousand-mile run, at Edinburgh. It was not to be a speed test, nevertheless elaborate preparations had been taken to protect the public; and there was a tacit understanding that for this occasion there were to be no police traps. Scouts told off by the Automobile Club and other organizations were to be stationed at all dangerous spots to warn

cars to go slowly, and any chauffeur driving to the public danger would be at once struck off the list of competitors.

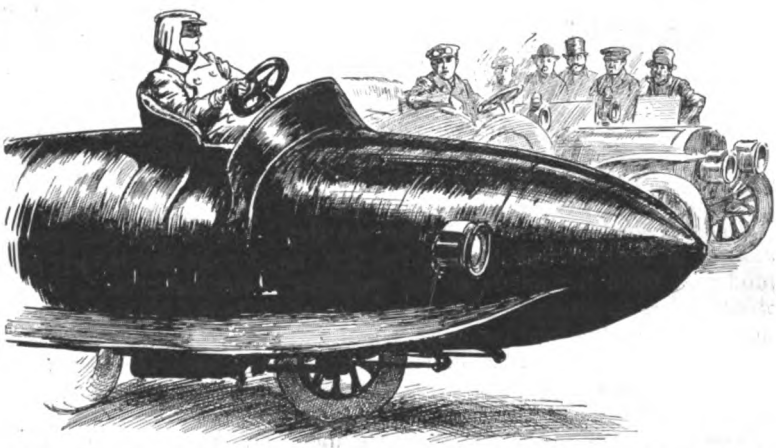
Early on the morning fixed for the start the automobiles began to move out of the big garage and take up their allotted places. An enormous crowd assembled to criticise or admire them. Never before had been seen such a collection of fearful and wonderful cars. It reminded many of that famous foggy November day in 1896 when motors were first allowed to run on English roads, and twenty or thirty coughing, barking, shaking machines started on the historic run to Brighton.

Everyone felt that this occasion was also historic. Accustomed for so long a time to the conventional design of motor-cars, people could not restrain their laughter at some of the extraordinary - looking creatures that came to the starting-point. Inventors seemed to have taken full advantage of the licence allowed by the conditions of the race, and it would be difficult to imagine an odder collection of self-propelled vehicles. Race himself stared round him, bewildered, as he took the place that had fallen to him by lot, and wondered if he had not stepped by accident into pantomime land. Scarlet Runner looked strictly conventional among all her queerly-shaped rivals, as all arrangements for the oil-drive were, of course, under her body; and to the ordinary eye Christopher Race's car proclaimed no special feature entitling her to rank among the freaks.

The place immediately in front of Scarlet Runner was vacant. No freak had yet come to take it; and officials organizing the race flitted nervously by, now and then, to glare at the untidy gap caused by somebody's tardiness. Very soon the leading car would be sent off, the others following at two-minute intervals; but the remaining time was slipping away without bringing any arrival to fill the vacancy.

Christopher was sitting in his car ready to move up when his turn should come, when an "O-o-o-h!" of astonishment from the crowd, sounding like the sudden indrawing of a breath, made him turn his head to glance curiously about for the cause of the excitement.

An amazing vehicle—if vehicle it could be called—was gliding, silent and snake-like, towards the empty place in front of Scarlet Runner. In shape it suggested a gigantic cigar; in colour it was black; and its jointless metal casing glittered in the wintry sunlight. Half-way down its length the great cigar was cut out into a nick, and in the nick sat, very upright and alert, the slender figure of a woman. She wore a leather jacket;



"AN AMAZING VEHICLE WAS GLIDING, SILENT AND SNAKE-LIKE, TOWARDS THE EMPTY PLACE IN FRONT OF SCARLET RUNNER."

her hair was covered by a kind of curtain descending from her leather cap, and fastening under her chin; and her eyes looked through goggles in an elfin mask, which protected and concealed the whole upper part of her face.

"A woman!" was the whisper that went round the crowd; and Christopher heard one hurrying official say to another: "Only arranged last night for her to do it. Old Dick Herbert's hurt his right hand, and so she——"

Race caught no more, but he instantly sprang to the conclusion that the trim figure in the strange car must be that of the famous woman motorist he had seen yesterday, Madame du Guesclin, the pride of sporting France. She and the beautiful but bad-tempered girl in the restaurant were undoubtedly on terms of intimate friendship

with Richard Herbert, the inventor of this gyroscopic freak; and what more natural—since Herbert found himself unable to drive in the race—than that this accomplished lady should offer to be his proxy?

Whether or no the hidden eyes behind the goggles recognised the young man in Scarlet Runner, for an instant the masked face turned to regard him, while, by means of a little wheel, the "chauffeuse" (as people were naming her) steered her extraordinary car into the vacant place. Christopher was half-inclined to take off his cap to her, so much did he admire her pluck and loyalty to her friend. Indeed, he felt as if they had a kind of acquaintance, even though it had not begun favourably.

Everything combined to focus the attention of the crowd upon the new arrival. A woman, apparently young, certainly brave and skilful, was to conduct the car during a long and trying race, and that appealed to the chivalry and romance latent in most men's hearts, even those who are most matter-of-fact. Besides, the car itself was so astonishing that, when it was in sight, no one would look at any other.

So swift, so stealthy, so snake-like was the motion of the remarkable machine that it produced upon the minds of the crowding onlookers a sensation akin to awe. In no single feature did this car copy the usual automobile, and all the assemblage of freaks suddenly looked quite commonplace compared with it.

The thing had no side wheels; but from under the metal casing two central wheels could be seen revolving, one placed behind the other, in a straight line. Running as it did upon these two central wheels alone, the marvel was that the vehicle could keep upright. Only while it was moving could it possibly do so, after the manner of a bicycle, thought the interested spectators, most of whom had heard of this new invention without really believing in it. But when the gyroscopic car had slid into its place directly in front of Scarlet Runner, and had come silently to a standstill, it still remained upright on its two central wheels. Those who were completely ignorant of the real nature of the invention regarded it as a kind of motor miracle; but Christopher and others who had read with intelligent interest of the machine which was being made understood more or less what was happening. They knew that the cigar-shaped vehicle was kept on its feet, so to speak, by the two small gyroscopes spinning in sealed chambers, one on each side of the car, and driven by the current from a small electric battery.

People who had looked forward to seeing the gyroscopic motor had given up the idea that it was likely to run; therefore its dramatic arrival at almost the last moment added to the interest created by its extraordinary appearance. A shout of applause rose, in response to which the trim chauffeuse nodded gaily, as if she took part of the tribute for herself. Then, doubtless with the feminine wish to "show off" what her car could do, she jumped lightly out to speak to an old man who came towards her. She had touched a hidden spring, and a step had dropped from the side of the carriage, enabling her to alight with ease. This was another score for the car, but there was better to come; for, sudden as was the displacement of weight, the vehicle only swayed through a small angle, immediately assuming its upright position again.

A new burst of applause arose, and the throng, pressing from all quarters to gaze at the marvel, nearly broke down the barriers put up to prevent interference with the competing automobiles.

This time the young woman did not bow, for she was talking earnestly to the old man who had come to her with one of the officials. He had his right hand swathed in bandages, and Christopher was sure that he must be Richard Herbert, the inventor of the now popular favourite. Race recalled, too, having seen the face in newspaper photographs at the time when the earlier invention had not yet turned out a failure. It was a fine face, keen, clever, and brave in outline, and Christopher asked himself, with a recurring qualm, whether he really had said anything sneering about the old man to Sir John Maverick yesterday. He did not think so, except, perhaps, in the way of a careless gibe; but if he had, he was more sorry than he had been.

He was thinking complimentary thoughts alike about the inventor, car, and chauffeuse when the masked young woman raised her voice to a tone loud enough for him to hear.

"Yes," she said, laughing, "we *are* the freakiest freak of all. And I'm glad; for this *is* a race for new inventions, and the newest ought to win. I really don't see what that poor, old, uninteresting red thing is doing in this *galère*, do you?"

It was the voice of the girl who had attacked Christopher in the restaurant yesterday; and so far from being repentant, she

was now gratifying her desire for revenge by attacking his car.

Abuse of Scarlet Runner was to Christopher what a red rag is to a bull, or a sneer at her first baby to a young mother.

"Vicious little vixen!" he said to himself, turning a colour to match his car. And instantly a furious desire to beat this girl in the race swept over him. He knew that it was childish, petty, what you will that is stupid and wrong-headed, to care in the least for her stabs; but he was as angry as if she had stuck her hat-pins into one of Scarlet Runner's beautiful fat tyres.

"I can beat her, and all the rest of them, and I will. Women shouldn't come into this sort of thing. I can't stand mannish girls," he thought. "This one shall see what the 'poor, old, uninteresting red thing' can do, anyhow."

As he then resolved, the freaks were busily getting away. The girl had hopped up into the gyroscopic car once more, an official observer from the club by her side, and then, with scarcely a sound from the engines, the black, cigar-shaped car shot ahead like a shark chasing its prey. Two minutes later came Christopher's turn, his own "observer" having by this time mounted to the seat beside him. They were off to cover the first mile of the thousand which would complete the test. And not one man but was his own chauffeur.

Through London and the stretch of suburbia that lies between town and country the long line of strange-looking automobiles —many built for the running of this race— ran slowly enough, serpentining in and out of traffic. The order had been given that no competitor must pass another until open spaces had been reached, therefore Christopher was compelled to keep at the enemy's back. He had but too many opportunities for observing the big cigar and its chauffeuse, of seeing the ease with which the car wormed in and out among big vehicles, how neatly it could whisk round a corner, swinging outwards, not inwards as other motors must; how sturdily it kept upright on its almost hidden wheels, and how the stares of people in the street followed it as if it were a magic thing.

Whatever the result of the race might be, it began to look as if the gyroscopic car was a success, and had come to stay.

Of its speed Christopher had been able to form no estimate until open country was reached, but then it shot forward with the speed of a newly-discovered comet. Opening Scarlet Runner's throttle he also leaped ahead, keeping close on the enemy's heels; and he realized with delight that, even without acceleration, he was holding his own in the race which seemed now to be beginning.

Soon the gyroscope, with Scarlet Runner close behind, gained upon the other cars that had started before them. Two were swiftly passed; others still ahead could be seen clearly through a light haze of dust, then more rivals were outdistanced; and so the day went on.

North-westward swept the long string of cars, keeping to the course mapped out; flying through English landscapes that were charming despite naked tree branches and frozen grass; slowing down for the controls in town after town; speeding out again to

"SOMETIMES CHRISTOPHER HAD THE QUEER BLACK THING WELL IN SIGHT."

white roads between bare meadows. And always the cigar-shaped car gained upon those that had started in advance, passing them one by one. Always, too, Scarlet Runner gave chase, never outdistancing the gyroscope, but never getting far outdistanced herself. Sometimes Christopher had the queer black thing well in sight, sometimes he lagged a few miles behind, according to the road surface; for the gyroscope had the great advantage of running on a single track, inequalities of the road mattering little; besides, less surface was presented to the wind.

The Cigar (as Christopher began to call the Herbert invention) and Scarlet Runner had started in the race fifteenth and sixteenth respectively; at the end of the first day the former was already ninth, the latter tenth. But Christopher was beginning to doubt his power to keep continually close to the enemy, much less to pass ahead; and he tried to console himself by thinking that his dangerous rival ought not to have been admitted as a competitor in this race. The thing was too much like a racing car.

The first night halt was in an important Midland town, where all the automobiles were driven to garages and locked up, so that no driver could touch his car without the knowledge of his own official observer. Most of the competitors stopped at the largest hotel in the place, and Christopher had the doubtful pleasure of seeing the fair chauffeuse (very smart and pretty in her dinner dress) being congratulated in the dining-room by a number of her chivalrous rivals. Madame du Guesclin (for whom he had mistaken the girl before the start) had arrived by train, to chaperon her friend and hear the latest news. Once, from across the room, Christopher saw her draw the attention of the chauffeuse to himself; but the girl immediately looked away again, shrugging her shoulders daintily. She appeared anything but mannish now, yet Christopher repeated to himself that she was one of those detestable young persons who, with all a woman's vanity, aped man. Even when he learned through a motoring acquaintance that she was Richard Herbert's daughter and only child, driving in her father's place because he was disabled, Race did not soften towards her in his heart. He wanted to beat her because she had made fun of Scarlet Runner; and in his desire to do that he half-forgot how much winning meant to him in other ways, until he received an encouraging telegram from his uncle. Then he remembered.

The race was to last five days, the competitors zigzagging about England to fill up the allotted distance before finishing at Edinburgh; and for the Cigar and Scarlet Runner the second day was almost a repetition of the first. Both passed other cars, but Christopher could not pass Miss Herbert, try as he might.

On the third day she had only three rivals in front of her, and the contest seemed to be resolving itself into a duel between the gyroscope and Scarlet Runner, the rest nowhere; for those still ahead were hardly holding their own.

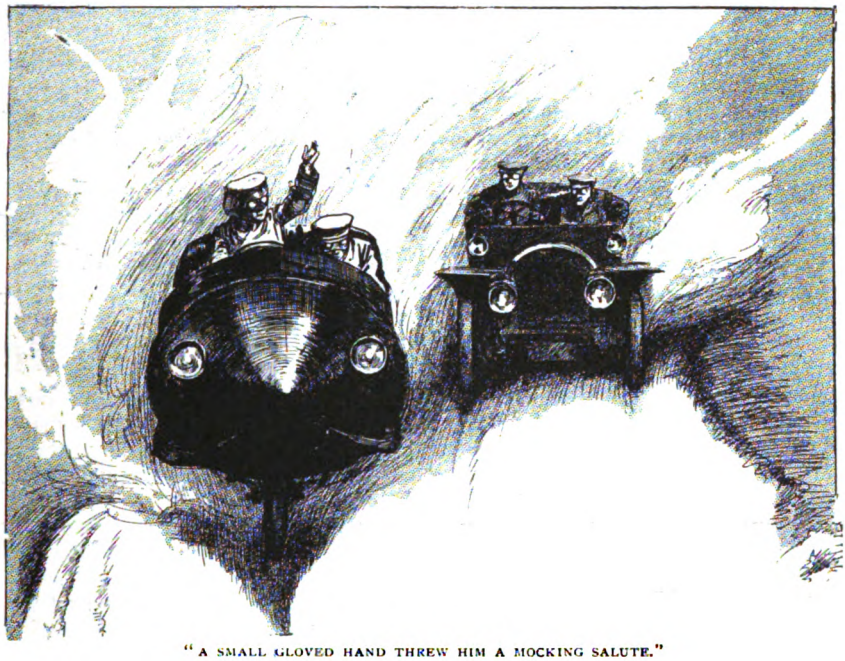
Not once during the long, hard hours had the black Cigar made an involuntary halt, and Scarlet Runner could have uttered the same boast if she had cared to waste time in talking. Public excitement was whipped up by long reports in the newspapers, and crowds lined the roads outside towns and big villages to cheer Miss Herbert and her dogged pursuer.

"Keep it up!" or, "Spurt, why don't you?" boys would yell; and on the fourth day Christopher obeyed. He did "spurt," and to his wild joy shot past the Cigar, to take the lead.

By this time the two were well in front of all pursuers, and they were breasting a steep hill when the gyroscope seemed to lose power and falter a little on the difficult incline. Perhaps there was a temporary failure of petrol pressure; perhaps a fault of ignition; but whatever the explanation, Christopher was quick to seize his chance. With a few gay notes of his musical siren he flashed past, leaped to the summit of the hill, and swooped down on the other side. But despite the lightning speed at which his manœuvre was accomplished, Christopher had had time to glance at Miss Herbert as he tore by.

Up till now she had been distinguished for her neatness, but it was as if excitement and anxiety had somehow disarranged the girl. A curling lock of hair the colour of a copper-beech leaf had escaped from its leather covering to fly in the wind like a flag signalling distress. Her mask, unfastened on one side, was hanging from the dust-covered cap by a cord, and the beautiful young face was pale and strained. Christopher suffered from a brief spasm of compassion, and his delight in triumph was dashed for a moment, but he said to himself that the winning of the race meant far more to him than it could to her. She would have no mercy upon him, nor did he want it. She would wish for none from him or any man if she were a true

sportswoman, and this she really did appear to be, though Christopher liked her none the better for that. If women would thrust themselves into the sports of men, there was little credit to them in not claiming chivalrous forbearance, for they would probably not know how to appreciate it if it were offered.



"A SMALL GLOVED HAND THREW HIM A MOCKING SALUTE."

He pressed Scarlet Runner for all she was worth, and was happy in maintaining the lead throughout the rest of the day. Naturally it fell to him to start first next morning, an advantage he expected to use to the utmost; but it is an old story that pride comes often before a fall.

For once Scarlet Runner did not work loyally with her master. What was the matter Christopher could not tell, for she had no recognisable symptoms, and of all things he did not wish to stop. But she was listless and out of sorts; her engine did not pull with its usual joyous energy. Evidently bracing northern winds were not so much to her taste as the milder airs of the south. The red car's heart beat sluggishly, and ten miles beyond the last halting-place he heard a horn-blast in his ear, pulled a little to his near side, and saw the Cigar dash by in an insulting cloud of dust. So swiftly flew the gyroscopic car that it tossed up a tornado of tiny whirling stones, which gave Christopher all he could do to keep Scarlet Runner straight, so did they obscure his view. Nevertheless, on the principle that disagreeable things are always the ones easiest to see, he was able to make out, in that swift bird-flight, that a small gloved hand threw him a mocking salute.

As if conscious of her wrongdoing, no sooner had the Cigar swept out of sight, and the cloud subsided, than Scarlet Runner picked up strength and energy, leaping forward like a hound that strains at his leash. There were still some hours left of this last day. Who could tell what the good car might do yet to retrieve her fortunes?

The morning fled. Christopher came to the next control without having had another glimpse of the gyroscope. There he learned that the enemy must be at least five miles in advance of him—an easy victory at last within reach, as it must seem to everyone.

Race, bitterly chagrined, tried to choke back his disappointment and make the best of it; but he felt that, if his successful rival had been anyone else rather than this revengeful-tempered young woman, it would have been less hard to bear defeat.

In his first rage at the news which seemed to mean failure he blurted out something of what was in his mind to the official observer who had been his close companion from the start.

"Pretty and young as she is, that girl

seems to have not one feminine grace which isn't of the body," he said, venomously. "What bad form to wave her hand as she passed me! But you can't make a woman understand how to play the game."

"I think you do her injustice," returned the observer, whose name was McLellan. "I believe she's a very nice girl, really; but her father is her idol. She'd do anything for him, people who know her say. It nearly broke her heart that other invention of his proving a failure a few years ago, when she was fifteen or sixteen. Old Dick Herbert practically brought her up by hand. He was middle-aged when he married her mother, who died at the girl's birth, and the two have been everything to each other since. She learned motor-driving and something of mechanics to please her father, because she knew he was inventing this gyroscopic car, and she thought, as he was old, a little practical chauffeuring might come in handy in the family. A friend of theirs told me the other day that this girl—Dorothy, I think her name is—has nearly used up a legacy left her by some relatives as a *dot* in having this car built. It must have cost a good bit of money, and they have next to nothing to live on. If the car wins the first prize a big syndicate has promised to take up the invention, I understand, and will manufacture for the market. That'll mean fortune as well as fame for Dick Herbert, so you see it isn't exactly unfeminine in the girl to want to win the race."

"I see," said Christopher; and he did see — several things. Having an almost uncomfortably strong sense of justice, he understood in this flash of enlightenment exactly how Dorothy Herbert, the father-worshipper, must have felt when she heard him freely discussing her idol and his inventions with the organizer of the race. Well, at least she was going to have her revenge! It was hard on him; but suddenly he realized that he did not grudge it to her as he had done five minutes ago.

"Look!" exclaimed McLellan, abruptly breaking a long silence. "What's that we've just come in sight of—down there, under the third hill?"

"By Jove! it's the Cigar!" cried Christopher.

There it was, a mere flying speck, seen far away across broken and undulating land, as Scarlet Runner, with heated pneus, topped a commanding hill.

At first there was doubt in Christopher's mind. It might be the Cigar; it might be some other automobile not connected with the race at all. But curiously soon doubt merged into certainty. There was no mistake about that queer, long shape; therefore, since he was going at his top speed, the gyroscopic car must have slowed down. Something was wrong; clearly something was wrong.

Assuredly Christopher was gaining on his rival, and gaining rapidly. He could see the outline of Miss Herbert's slim figure, with the broad back of the stolid official observer by her side.

Scarlet Runner was at her very best, but, until now, that best had not been enough to defeat this conquering enemy.

Christopher felt like patting the car as if she had been a mare, and chirruping words of encouragement.

"You've got a chance yet," said McLellan; and Race's heart leaped.

He was hot on his rival's trail now—so near that to his surprise and almost horror he could see that the snaky gyroscope was slowing, and rocking strangely from side to side.

The stolid observer seated in that strange "nick" of the Cigar was stolid no longer. In alarm he half-rose from his seat; the car swayed more violently, like a ship wallowing in the trough of the sea; then two little legs shot down, one on either side, as if in self-defence. The black, shark-like object ran in towards the near side and came to a standstill.

"Was the stop involuntary?" Christopher eagerly asked himself. It looked as if it were. And, if so, his own chance of winning was redoubled. The car that got in first and had had the fewest mishaps would win. He had had no mishaps yet, and it only remained for him to arrive first at the winning-post.

So far he and Miss Herbert were the two drivers who had not had to make involuntary stops. Others had had two or three each. Now, he alone had had none; for even as he thought it became clear that the gyroscope was in trouble.

It stood sturdily upright, but helpless, on its little metal legs, and as Christopher came up the girl had just got down, utter dejection in every line of her figure and the droop of her once proud head. Something in himself, which he did not understand and could not account for, made him disconnect the oil force-pump and put on the brake. Scarlet Runner stopped, pulsing, by the side of the sad Cigar.

"What on earth are you about?" growled McLellan. "Don't you know you're giving away your race?"

"Can't help it. Think something's wrong with me," Christopher muttered, a misleading answer. For if something were wrong with him, there was nothing wrong with his car.

He got down from his car and walked towards her.

"Can I do anything for you, Miss Herbert?" he asked correctly, raising his cap, as if he had come across a stranded motor on an ordinary road excursion.

"THE GIRL WAS GAZING AT HIM IN ASTONISHMENT."

The girl was gazing at him in astonishment. Her mask was off and her charming face, white to the lips, was bathed in dusty tears. Oh, no, there was nothing mannish about her now! But Christopher had forgotten that he had ever accused her, in his mind. She looked so young, so forlorn, so broken-hearted, that her brave attempt to rally and ignore her tears at sight of him seemed doubly pathetic to Christopher.

"Do anything for me?" she echoed, in astonishment so profound as to reveal how entirely she had regarded him as the implacable enemy. "I—don't understand. I'm *en panne*. You've beaten me. Please go on. I—I can't start again, that's all."

Her voice wavered and choked. She turned away her face to hide tears that would begin to fall again to water the dead ashes of her hopes.

"I should like to help you, if I can," said Christopher.

"But—but why?" asked the girl, almost suspiciously. "I've been most horribly rude to you—not that you didn't deserve it. But anyhow, *I* don't deserve anything of you now, except—except hatred."

"You haven't exactly put yourself out to please me," returned Christopher, dryly. "But why should you? And I'm not doing this to please you. It's because I can't do anything else. What do you think's the matter?" he inquired.

"Oh, short-circuit somewhere, and the gyroscopes won't spin," she answered, desperately. "If they don't turn, the car can't keep upright when in motion. You're awfully kind—quite incredibly kind, heaping coals of fire on my head. But you can't do anything for me, except go on and leave me to my fate."

"Let me see if I can't do something," the young man patiently persisted. "Dog can't eat dog, you know."

There was nothing concerning mechanism, or accumulators, batteries, and wires, that Christopher Race had not studied and learned by heart. From remote days of early Benzes and original Léon Bollées he had wrestled with these things by the roadside until knowledge of their myriad eccentricities had eaten into his very being. Now, it needed no very profound research to discover what had happened to the Cigar. One accumulator was exhausted, as Miss Herbert would soon have found out when she had had a chance to examine the inner workings of her car. There had been short-circuiting through a badly-insulated wire.

"Accumulator used up," announced Christopher.

"I was afraid so. Oh, poor father! What will become of me?" wailed the girl, in a very small, heart-broken voice.

"I have a spare one," Christopher said. "You're very welcome to it."

"No," she cried, "I wouldn't take it from you. I couldn't possibly. Oh, you don't know how you're making me feel, offering me the chance to win the race from you, when already it was as good as yours. And *you*—of all people! I——"

"Don't say any more," cut in Christopher. "I want you to have the accumulator. Then

we can start fair again, when you *have* your chance. I shouldn't enjoy a win now unless you had that chance. No credit to me, you see. If we linger here some of the others will be on us, and neither of us will win. What? It won't take a minute to fit."

The temptation was too great for her. She let him run back to his car (which she couldn't help remembering that she had called a "poor, old, uninteresting red thing") and take from under the seat that spare accumulator which might mean salvation for her and defeat for him.

Then he began working with quick, deft fingers at the Cigar, while the two official observers, who had seized the opportunity for cigarettes, looked at their stop-watches and made a hasty jotting or two in their note-books.

"There!" exclaimed Christopher. "You've plenty of power for your gyroscopes again. See, they're spinning round like mad. Now you can get off."

As he spoke the girl sprang to her seat, the observer following her example, as McLellan climbed expectantly back into Scarlet Runner. "I can never thank you enough for—for the coals of fire," Miss Herbert said, her hand on the steering-wheel. "But—I'm going to let you start first. Oh, why *don't* you go? We mustn't wait. I almost think I see a car coming in the distance behind."

"No, you mustn't wait," echoed Christopher, laconically.

He was standing against one of his own driving-wheels, looking up at her with an odd expression in his eyes, as if he were suddenly very tired. She was no longer white. A bright colour stained her cheeks, but it was Christopher who was pale under dust and tan. He felt rather dejected, for he was in the act of doing a hideous thing—wounding his best friend. Also he was throwing away ten thousand pounds, and a fortune from his uncle, just because a girl had cried and looked forlorn—a young girl, brave and loyal, who had impoverished herself for her father and was fighting for him now against all odds.

Christopher had quietly, stealthily taken a penknife from his pocket and, with his hand behind him, had driven the little blade deep into Scarlet Runner's tyre. Poor, faithful Scarlet Runner, who had served him so well, and whose heart was throbbing still with the desire and power to bear him on to victory! Yet he couldn't take that victory, and see the girl lose. He had hated her, but he didn't hate her now. He simply couldn't be the cause of making her fight in vain.

"I said *we* mustn't wait. And you must go first," she repeated.

"Sorry," said Christopher, dully, with a lump in his throat, as he hoped that Scarlet Runner would forgive him. "I'm afraid I can't obey. I appear to be hung up too. Tyre down, I see."

Dorothy Herbert stared at the flattening rubber, and McLellan whistled faintly, making a sound rather like the escaping air which gushed from the tyre's wounded inner tube.

"It would be quixotic of you to wait for me now," went on Christopher. "Fortune of war. But I don't give up yet. It won't take me long to replace this tyre, and I have a fighting chance still. But there's no fun for either of us if you don't start at once. I beg you to go on."

Hesitating, half-reluctant, half-eager, the girl let herself be hypnotized by the command in her late enemy's eyes. Almost mechanically her foot pressed the clutch lever; a touch on another lever drew up the supporting metal legs. The car moved forward. Once the driver looked back, maskless; a few seconds later she had dropped over the brow of a hill.

"I suppose I shall have to record this—er—stop against you," said McLellan, as Christopher renewed the inner tube and forced on the cover by means of the new American tool which had served him bravely not long ago, on a certain eventful journey to Barnet. "It's my duty to do that. All the same, I—well, I think it's about the finest thing I've ever known a man to do—jolly lot finer than the record you might have made, if you hadn't done it."

"There are some things you *must* do—you don't know why," grumbled Christopher, once more taking his seat.

Far beyond the outskirts of Edinburgh crowds began to line the roadway on either side—cheering, enthusiastic crowds, prepared to give the winners a hearty Scotch welcome. Then, thicker and thicker grew the press in the southern suburbs. It seemed that Lowlands and Highlands had banded together to form one huge, shouting throng.

"Put on a spurt, master!" roared a tall soldier in kilts. "The lassie's no far ahead o' ye the noo!"

Christopher smiled, but not very gaily. He was beating down the temptation to lessen the distance between the cars, and he had conquered it just enough to give that smile.

At last he struck the superb line of Princes Street, and far away at the other end he could see a crimson banner, which marked the winning-post. Speeding towards that flutter of red (yet not so fast as it might have gone if the chauffeuse had chosen) was the gyroscope.

The air rang with applause as the snake-like car, with the pale girl driving, passed beneath the flag; and Christopher, hearing, could not have analysed the feelings which surged in his breast.

He had timed his own arrival as he followed, and he came in at the finish precisely as he had started, exactly two minutes behind the car which set out before him.

Those who did not know doubtless thought he ought to be glad and proud to win the second prize, an exceedingly handsome gold cup; but Christopher knew, and if he had not known he would have become unpleasantly certain when he saw his uncle's face.

The old man had come by train to Edinburgh to meet the winner of the first prize, who, from telegraphic accounts, he had little doubt would be his nephew.

He had taken a suite of rooms at the hotel which he considered best, and had ordered the most elaborate dinner the *chef* could produce, to be accompanied by plenty of the most expensive champagne. And, behold, his joyous preparations were wasted!

This was bad enough, but a few words from McLellan (to whom he had been introduced on the day of the start) made matters worse. The two met in the hall of the hotel where Mr. Race was all but dancing with rage as he waited to berate the Failure who was putting up Scarlet Runner in the garage. A few words, well meant on McLellan's part, and spoken in praise of Christopher's chivalrous generosity, gave the old man some idea of the true state of the case.

Unable to trust himself longer in the society of his fellow-man, he stumbled upstairs to the private dining-room, where the flower-decorated table completely maddened him. He had left word for his nephew to follow, and when Christopher arrived he was in the act of throwing a large bunch of hot-house roses into the fire.

"Don't do that, uncle. It's murder," said the young man, whose mother had taught him to respect the rights of flowers.

"I—I *want* to commit murder," stammered Mr. Race, too furious to be coherent. "I'd—I'd like to murder you, and smash up your beastly car."

"Come, isn't that rather hitting a man when he's down?" suggested Christopher. "I didn't enjoy getting beaten, you know."

"Oh, didn't you, indeed? Then why did you let yourself be beaten?" shouted his uncle. "You needn't think to deceive me. I *know* what you did. You'd play Quixote, would you? Well, you'll find it an expensive part to keep up. Perhaps you didn't think I meant what I said; but I did, every word of it. You've chucked away ten thousand pounds of good money you might have had for the taking, and a hundred thousand besides—which I'm not going to leave to a love-sick fool."

"Love-sick fool?" echoed Christopher, surprised. "What do you mean?"

"Perhaps you didn't know that McLellan saw you stick a knife into your tyre because you'd fallen in love with some baby-faced girl, who——"

"'YOU SHALL NOT TALK TO HIM LIKE THAT; I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE!' SHE EXCLAIMED."

"Oh, *did* you stick a knife into it?" cried a horrified voice at the door.

Neither man had heard a knock, or seen the door—which had not been closed—gently pushed open.

Dorothy Herbert had lain in wait vainly outside for someone who had deliberately (but from the best intentions) avoided meeting her. Then she had inquired, and learned that Mr. Race had a private sitting-room—No. 19—on the first floor. She had asked to be taken there, not knowing that there was more than one Mr. Race; and, hearing an angry voice, had been seized with a terrible idea. The man who had made a great sacrifice for her was being reproached, she thought, by some official connected with the race for giving it away. She must defend him! . . . But though she had suspected something, she had not known what effectual means he had taken to give her a long start at the end.

As both men turned to look at her, and she saw the elder's fierce old face, dark red with anger, her spirit rose.

"You shall not talk to him like that; I don't care who you are!" she exclaimed. "It's nonsense to say he cared about my 'baby face,' for *I'm* the girl he allowed to beat him. Why, he *hates* me—and I deserve it. He did the noble, chivalrous thing you're scolding him for, simply because I was a woman, crying there in the road, and perhaps because he knew how much it meant for me to win. My father is Richard Herbert——"

"I don't care who your father is, child—but, for Heaven's sake, who was your mother?" faltered Mr. Race, in a changed voice, staring with eager eyes at the girl. "I saw you in London the day before the start. You were in a restaurant. I—you are the image of someone I once knew—someone I once loved—who went out of my life and disappeared."

"They say I'm like my mother," said the girl, her face softening. "Her name was Dorothy Lindell."

"I thought so!" exclaimed the old man. "You are Dorothy Lindell over again. She was the only woman I ever cared for, though she was almost young enough to be my daughter. She promised to be my wife; but before the time came she ran away, and left a note saying she couldn't make up her mind to have me; she'd only consented to please an aunt of hers who'd brought her up—consented because I was rich. I never saw her again, and I hated her for a while, but she wasn't the kind a man could hate long, no matter what she did to him, or how hard he was. I forgave her in time—so thoroughly that last year, when I had cause to be disgusted with my nephew here, I half made up my mind to advertise for her or her heirs and leave one or the other all I have in the world. So you're the girl Christopher Race risked ruining himself for?"

"I'm the girl to whom he's behaved like a knight of King Arthur's table," Dorothy Herbert answered.

"Then—I wish he *would* be a love-sick fool. Anyhow, I forgive him now. I wouldn't have had him do anything different. Do you hear that, Chris? Shake hands."

Christopher shook hands. And even as he did so he began to realize that, perhaps, after all, he was what his uncle called him. He had often been half in love, but never wholly in love until—could it be possible he *was?*—now. But then he had never known such a girl. There never could have been such a girl, not even Dorothy Lindell, who was the "kind that no man could hate for long."

After all, they ate the elaborate dinner and drank the expensive champagne, and Mr. Race sent down for more roses—many more roses, because Dorothy Herbert, the winner of the race, and her friend Madame du Guesclin were his guests.

By the time the evening was over Christopher did not wonder any more about the matter, but was quite sure, once and for all, that he *was* a love-sick fool. When his uncle accused him of it again—in a very different tone—he confessed. No scolding followed, however.

"She'll get a rich husband if she takes you," the old man said. "But—I don't believe she'll be marrying you for your money. You have certain attractions, and I've an idea she's aware of them already. It's only fair you should get a prize of some sort, and I expect she'll see that. She seems wonderfully fair-minded—for a woman, and not conceited, either; so whether she'll think she's good enough to make up to you for the ten thousand pounds you flung her, to say nothing of the hundred thousand you'd have lost if she hadn't had her mother's face, who can tell?"

Nobody could tell. But Christopher asked that question, or something equivalent, and Dorothy answered that she would do her best. It is easy for a girl to "do her best" for the man she loves; and the chauffeuse of the gyroscope thought the chauffeur of Scarlet Runner the only man in the world—except Dick Herbert.

BRIDGE BLUNDERS,
OR
HANDS THAT WENT WRONG.

By William Dalton,

Author of "Dalton on Bridge," "'Saturday' Bridge," "Bridge at a Glance," etc.

WHEN I mentioned to my friends that I had been asked to write an article on "Blunders at Bridge," they said: "That's easy enough. You have only got to watch So-and-so for half an hour to get any amount of material," naming their own particular pet aversion at the bridge table. Certainly one sees plenty of mistakes and makes plenty of mistakes every day that one plays bridge, but still it is not altogether easy to quote remarkable instances. The result of mistakes varies so very much. Sometimes quite a small error will have the most dire consequences, and at other times one may make a bad blunder and yet not lose much by it.

Everybody who plays bridge regularly is bound to make mistakes. That is an absolute certainty. Do not run away with the idea that the faculty of making blunders, and bad blunders, is confined to indifferent players. Nobody is perfect at anything. We are told that even Homer nodded at times, and in the same way even the finest bridge-players will occasionally be caught napping. The only difference is that when the good player has made a blunder he will generally be the first to recognise the fact and to acknowledge it, whereas the indifferent player will try to defend himself and to argue that he was right.

There are certain common and rather expensive errors which inexperienced players are very apt to fall into. Perhaps the most common of them all is not returning their partner's original lead at No Trumps because they can see a winning card, or possibly a tenace, in the dummy. They fail to recognise that that winning card or that tenace is there and is bound to make in any case, whether they lead up to it or not, so instead of continuing with the original suit they open another one at random, and the result is generally disastrous.

There can be no more aggravating partner than the player who will not return your original lead at No Trumps. He will say afterwards, "I could not return your lead right up to the ace or the king." But why not? That ace or that king is going to win a trick, and the sooner it is got rid of the better.

A similar instance is when a player has to lead up to dummy and holds king and one other of a suit of which neither the ace nor the queen is in the dummy hand. Nothing will induce the indifferent player to touch this suit. He will lead anything rather. He will cling on like grim death to that singly-guarded king, although it is absolutely useless unless his partner has either the ace or queen. This lead of the king from king and one up to weakness in dummy is a very favourite one with all good players, especially against a suit declaration. It can do no possible harm, and it may be so very useful. I remember once leading from this combination up to the knave and two others in dummy. My king won the trick and I followed with the small one; my partner won with the queen and led another small one, which I trumped. The dealer had the ace all the time, but he had tried to play what

is known as the "Bath *coup*," with the result that he did not win a trick in the suit at all.

Some players are very wooden. Not long ago I was playing with a partner of this pattern against a No-Trump declaration made by the dummy. My partner had the opening lead, and things had gone very badly for us—in fact, we had not won a single trick. At last he got the lead. Every suit was marked against us except spades, which had not been touched. My partner had king and one other, and the queen, 10, and another were in dummy. The game was absolutely lost unless I held the ace and knave of spades. As a matter of fact I had them both and three others, but do you suppose that he would lead that king of spades? Not a chance. He led something else and we lost the game. When it was over I suggested, very mildly, "Could not you have tried me with a spade? It was the only chance of saving the game." He replied, in a most aggrieved tone of voice, "I couldn't possibly lead that. I had only king and one other, and I was certain to make a trick in the suit if I sat tight with it." He did sit tight with it, and we made one trick in the suit, but that was all we did make; and we lost five by cards instead of losing only the odd trick. Yet nothing on earth would have induced that man to acknowledge that he had played wrong.

Leading an ace "to have a look round" is another very common form of giving away tricks. Certainly the look round is obtained, but often at a heavy expense, and the look round is usually of very little use when it is obtained. Some players never seem to realize that an ace has other uses besides winning one trick. Its proper office is to slay a king or queen, and to stop that suit for the time being. Also it is invaluable as a card of re-entry, and those precious cards of re-entry—how dearly we miss them when they have been lightly parted with early in the hand. The value of an ace is nowadays recognised by almost everybody in the No-Trump game, but against a suit declaration it is still a favourite practice with weak players to lead out an ace if they have one so as to see the dummy hand before parting with the lead, and many a game is sacrificed by so doing.

One sometimes sees the most extraordinary and inexplicable blunders, but I think that the worst I ever saw made by a player with any pretensions to knowledge of the game, or even to common sense, was the following.

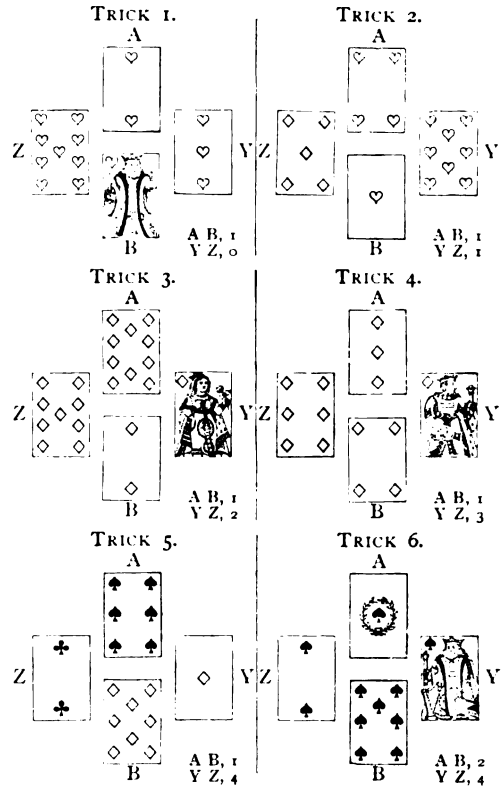
The score was Y Z 24, A B 18.

Z dealt and left it to Y, who declared diamonds. A had to lead. A's hand and Y's were:—

Hearts—Queen, knave, 7, 6, 5, 4, 2.
Diamonds—10, 3.
Clubs—Queen, 4.
Spades—Ace, 6.

A (dealer) Z Y (dummy) B

Hearts—8, 3.
Diamonds—Ace, king, queen, 7.
Clubs—King, knave, 5.
Spades—King, queen, 9, 3.



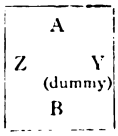
A now had to lead. His partner was marked with the best trump, the knave, and the only remaining heart. The only possible chance of saving the game was that his partner had the ace of clubs, but what a chance it was. If his partner had the ace of clubs, which he had, the 7 of trumps in dummy's hand could be drawn and all the hearts were good—three by cards and the game. The dealer had played the hand very badly. He ought to have cleared his spade suit before he touched the trumps at all. If he had done this the game would never have been in doubt, but he did not do it. By taking out the trumps before getting rid of the ace of spades, he presented his opponents with a splendid opportunity of turning the

tables on him; and fancy a man being offered such a chance as this of getting out of a tight place and not availing himself of it. It seems hardly credible, but it is a fact that after serious thought A led the knave of hearts, dummy made his little trump, and all that A B made were the knave of trumps and the ace of clubs, losing three by cards instead of winning three. A's partner looked at him for a moment and said nothing—his feelings were too deep for words.

A hand occurred lately in which the leading of a wrong card brought about the most disastrous result. The case was much discussed and opinions were greatly divided as to which of the two partners was wrong.

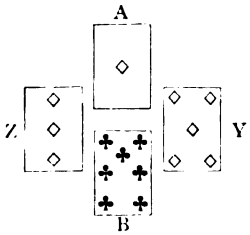
The score was A B 24, Y Z 6, the last game of the rubber. Z dealt and declared no trumps. B doubled. A led the ace of diamonds and the dummy hand was put down.

Hearts—None.
Diamonds—Ace, queen, knave, 9, 8, 6, 4, 2.
Clubs—6.
Spades—9, 8, 7, 4.



Hearts—10, 7, 3.
Diamonds—5.
Clubs—10, 9, 8, 5, 3.
Spades—6, 5, 3, 2.

The first trick was:—



A then had to consider what to play next. It was, of course, quite obvious to him that his partner had doubled on hearts; but he had not got one. The position of all the diamonds was also marked. The dealer had the king, 10, 7 remaining. Just ask yourself how you would have continued this hand, without knowing anything about the disposition of the unknown cards. The state of the score had considerable bearing on it. With a game and 24 against him the dealer's declaration was very likely to have been a desperation one, and B might easily have an entry card in spades or clubs, or even in both. He had directed his partner by his discard not to lead a club; therefore A had two courses open to him—either to lead a spade in the hope that B might have the ace, or to put Z in by leading the queen of diamonds and so compel him to open a fresh suit up to B. He elected to take the latter course, and led the queen of diamonds, and by so doing lost the game and rubber. The dealer had six clubs headed by the quart major, which, with the king of diamonds, gave him the odd trick and game.

B's hand, on which he doubled, was a very singular one:—

Hearts—Ace, king, queen, 9, 6, 5, 4, 2.
Diamonds—None.
Clubs—7.
Spades—Ace, king, queen, knave.

Directly his partner led the ace of diamonds he said to himself, "If I discard my single club, my partner must lead me either a heart or a spade, and in either case there is a laid down grand slam," but he was a little hasty in his judgment. He could see eleven hearts, eight in his own hand and three on the table, and it ought to have occurred to him that it was not only possible, but even probable, that his partner was void in hearts, and would be very much on the horns of a dilemma as to how to put him in. If this had occurred to him, he would surely have discarded his ace of spades so as to leave his partner in no possible doubt. He had an absolute certainty of the small slam, by discarding the ace of spades, at 24 points per trick, but this was not enough for him; he tried to squeeze an extra trick and an extra 20 points for grand slam, and by so doing lost the game and rubber. Instead of taking the certainty of 164 points and winning the rubber, he lost 24 points and the rubber as well, amounting to a net loss of 388 points.

A and B were both first-rate players, and after it was over each blamed the other for having played wrong, B arguing that A ought to have tried him with a spade, after he had discarded the club, as being the only possible chance, A retaliating by saying that B ought to have discarded the ace of spades to the diamond trick, so as to show him what to lead. The onlookers joined in the discussion, some taking one side and some the other, and the hand was afterwards submitted to two or three leading lights of the game of bridge, but again opinions were divided. Anyhow, whichever was to blame, it was certainly a record difference to be made by the play of one wrong card.

Playing too quickly to the first trick, without giving oneself time to thoroughly review the situation, is a very fruitful source of error; in fact, nearly all the bad muddles made by the dealer in manipulating his two hands can be traced to this cause. The most common blunder which is made in this way is winning the first trick in the wrong hand. This situation is constantly occurring in different forms. Let us take a simple instance:—

DEALER'S HAND.
Hearts—Ace, 4, 2.
Diamonds—Ace, king, 8, 3.
Clubs—Ace, queen, 8, 5.
Spades—5, 2.

DUMMY'S HAND.
Hearts—Queen, knave, 10.
Diamonds—10, 7.
Clubs—8, 5.
Spades—King, queen, knave, 10, 4, 3.

The dealer declares no trumps, a small heart is led, and dummy's 10 is good. If the dealer plays a small one quickly from his own hand, he has no possible chance of ever putting dummy in again after the spades are established, but if he takes over the 10 of hearts with his ace dummy can get in again with either the queen or knave of hearts and make his long spades.

Many and many a game is lost by the dealer not stopping to think the situation out before he plays a card at all. I threw away a game myself, quite recently, through this very blunder.

Our opponents were 18 up and we were 8. I dealt and left it to my partner, who declared no trumps. The two hands were :—

DEALER.	DUMMY.
Hearts—10, 2.	Hearts—Ace, 4.
Diamonds—10, 9, 4, 3.	Diamonds—Ace, knave, 7, 2.
Clubs—Ace, king, 9, 8, 4, 2.	Clubs—Knave, 7.
Spades—Knave.	Spades—Ace, queen, 8, 6, 4.

The 5 of spades was led. Sometimes one makes up one's mind that a particular card is in one hand, and feels so certain of its being there that one does not stop to think what will happen should the presumption be wrong. I did so in this case. I at once placed the king of spades with the leader and played the 4 from dummy without having reviewed the situation at all. If I had given it a moment's thought before playing to the first trick I should have seen that I had an absolute certainty of winning the game by putting on the ace of spades at once, and giving away the first trick in clubs, unless there were four clubs in one hand, which was not likely. Five tricks in clubs and the other three aces would have given me the game. What happened was that the third player won the first trick with the king of spades, and at once opened the heart suit, of which he had six. I won with the ace of hearts, and led the knave of clubs ; it was covered by the queen, and my only possible hope of winning the game then was to drop the 10 of clubs on the second round. It did not come off, and we lost the odd trick and the game, instead of winning two by cards, game, and rubber. My partner—good, honest man—said not a word, probably because he failed to recognise what possibilities I had missed ; but, unfortunately for me, a very observant friend of mine was looking over my hand, and he spotted it at once. "What in the world is the use of your writing books on bridge," he said, "if you don't practise what you preach? That hand was almost identical with an Illustrative Hand which you quoted and explained in 'Bridge Abridged.'" The accusation was, alas! only too true. I had given almost exactly the same hand, and expatiated at some length on the importance of putting on the ace at once and risking nothing.

One of the most curious blunders which I ever saw, and at the same time a very profitable one for my partner and myself, occurred in the final round of a mixed bridge tournament.

Each side had won one rubber and one game in the deciding rubber. The man on my right, who was an extremely pleasant and agreeable player, but who appeared to have a somewhat elementary knowledge of the finer points of the game, dealt, and declared no trumps on a good, sound hand with three aces. His partner put down five diamonds headed by queen, knave, 10, the king of clubs, and no other possible card of entry. He got in at once, put his partner in with the king of clubs, and led the queen of diamonds. I held king and two small ones, and I naturally allowed the queen to win. The knave was then led, which I won with my king. I noticed my opponent give a little start of surprise when my king appeared on the second round. The diamond suit was now blocked by his own ace, and he only won two by cards. He appeared to think this rather a fine *coup*, and said to me when the hand was over, "I quite thought I should win the game when the queen of diamonds made." I said, "Yes, it was a lucky inspiration of mine holding up the king," although it is hardly necessary to say that it was a most simple and ordinary proceeding.

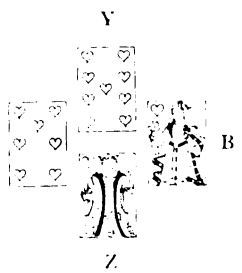
It was then my deal, and the situation was rather a desperate one, with a game and 24 to love against us. I declared no trumps on the following rather sketchy hand :—

Hearts—King, 5.
Diamonds—7, 2.
Clubs—Ace, king, 10, 9, 6, 4.
Spades—Queen, 10, 3.

The 7 of hearts was led and my partner put down :—

Hearts—Knave, 9.
Diamonds—Ace, queen, knave, 6, 3.
Clubs—Knave, 5, 2.
Spades—9, 8, 6.

The first trick was :—



The prospect was then very bad indeed for us. There were four winning hearts at least in one hand, and the ace and king of spades also against us. My only chance of winning the game was to find the king of diamonds on my left and to succeed in dropping the queen of clubs. I led the 2 of diamonds and finessed the queen, which won the trick. That was one fence passed. I then led dummy's knave of clubs; it was covered by the queen and there was the game won—six tricks in clubs, two in diamonds, and one in hearts—and we won the rubber and the tournament.

I may mention that I had no temptation to finesse the diamonds a second time, as the player on my left had discarded her remaining two small ones on the clubs, and the situation was disclosed. The fourth player had the king of diamonds all the time, but he had been so struck by the success of my holding up the king in the last hand that he tried the same *coup*, but with a very different result. His hand was :—

Hearts—Queen, 6, 3.
Diamonds—King, 10, 8.
Clubs—Queen, 7, 2.
Spades—Ace, king, 8, 5,

and his projected *coup* was about as bad as anything could be. By a simple application of the Eleven Rule his partner was marked with at least three winning hearts, and probably four—as a matter of fact she had five left. Anyhow, supposing that she had only three, he could see a certainty of six tricks—three in hearts, one in diamonds, and two in spades, with no possibility of losing the game and a good chance of winning it. As the cards were placed we must have lost two tricks, but the lucky coincidence of my having held up the king of diamonds in the previous hand not only saved the game, but won us the rubber, and, incidentally, the tournament also.

The blunders made by beginners, simply from a want of knowledge of the game, sometimes produce most unexpected results, and have been known to upset altogether the calculations of more experienced players, as the following little anecdote will illustrate.

A certain man, whom we will call the Neophyte, had been elected a member of a well-known London club where a great deal of bridge is played, and where the standard of play is distinctly good. He had a very shadowy and imperfect knowledge of the game, but he had played a good deal with people of his own calibre, and, so far from being conscious of his limitations, he really fancied himself very much as a bridge-player. What he lacked in knowledge he made up for in self-confidence.

The very first time that he appeared in the card-room of his new club he happened to cut in to a rubber with three of the best players, where he was hopelessly outclassed. His proposer was present and said to him, "I must warn you that you are trying yourself rather high playing in this company." "Oh, I'm not afraid," he replied; "give me the cards and I can hold my own with the best of them." "All right," said his friend; "go ahead."

The first few hands were comparatively simple. The Neophyte held very good cards and did not commit any particularly egregious blunders. Then the opponent on his right had the deal. The score was one game all, and 8 to love against the dealer. The dealer left it and dummy declared no trumps.

The four hands were :—

Hearts—8, 6, 2.
Diamonds—10, 9, 8, 5, 3.
Clubs—Knave, 7, 3.
Spades—8, 5.

Hearts—10, 3.
Diamonds—Queen, 6.
Clubs—Queen, 6, 2.
Spades—King, queen, 10, 6, 4, 2

A (neophyte) (dealer)
Z Y
(dummy) B

Hearts—King, knave, 5.
Diamonds—Ace, knave, 4.
Clubs—Ace, king, 10, 9, 8, 5.
Spades—Ace.

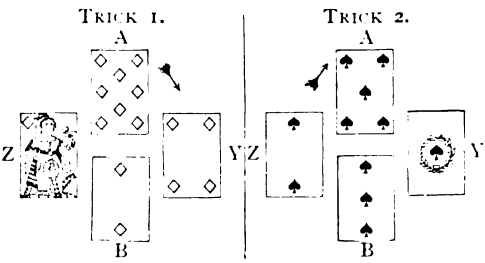
Hearts—Ace, queen, 9, 7, 4.
Diamonds—King, 7, 2.
Clubs—4.
Spades—Knave, 9, 7, 3.

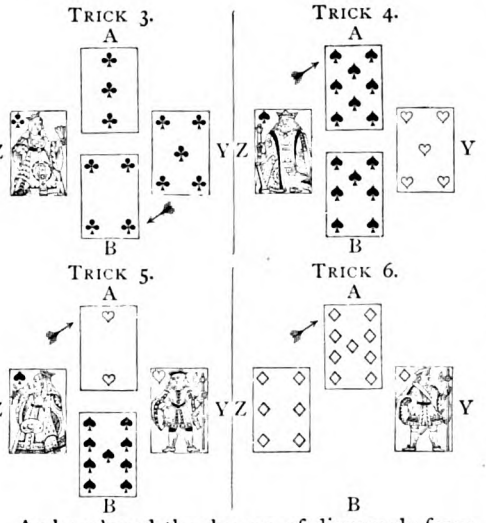
The Neophyte had to lead from a very bad hand. He had a hazy sort of notion in his head that when he had a sequence he ought to lead one of them, but he did not think it mattered which he led, so he selected the 8 of diamonds.

The sequel is really very instructive. The 4 was put on from dummy, and the third player saw at once, by the Eleven Rule, that the dealer could not beat the 8, so he passed it, only, to his utter consternation, to see it taken by the queen in the dealer's hand.

The dealer could now see the grand slam if he could succeed in catching the knave of spades, and a certainty of the small slam in any case, the king, 10, 9 of diamonds being plainly marked in the Neophyte's hand.

The first six tricks were :—



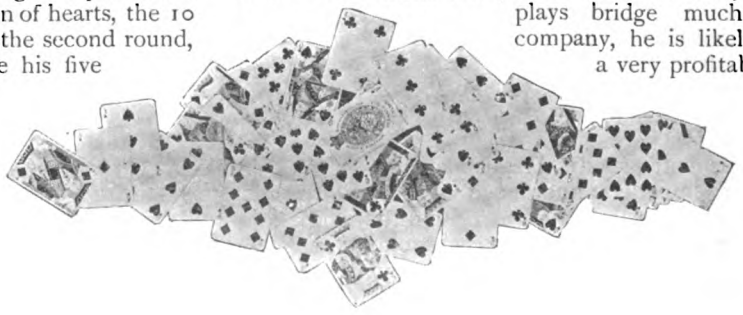


As he played the knave of diamonds from dummy's hand the dealer threw down his cards and said, "It's no good playing it. The clubs are good against the cards, but I must give you one trick in hearts. We win the small slam, 72 below and 50 above."

"Not at all," said the fourth player, putting down the king of diamonds. "I win that trick, and one or two more." And he calmly proceeded to gather the trick.

The dealer's face was a study. He was a very careful player, who rather prided himself on extracting the utmost value from every hand, and never in his life before had he failed to win a game which was absolutely at his mercy, but the Neophyte's original lead of the 8 of diamonds had marked the king, 10, 9 so plainly in his hand that the dealer did not regard the play of the knave instead of the ace as being a finesse at all, nor did he dream for a moment that he was taking any possible risk. If a thunderbolt had come through the roof, it would not have surprised him so much as the appearance of the king of diamonds from B's hand. The game proceeded. B led the ace and queen of hearts, the 10 dropped on the second round, and he made his five hearts, and then led the knave of spades to the twelfth trick. The dummy was now left with the ace of diamonds and the ace of clubs, and the dealer had to discard one of them. He had been so upset by the very unexpected turn of affairs that he had neglected to watch the discards as closely as he would otherwise have done. The Neophyte meanwhile had discarded all his diamonds and left himself with the knave and 7 of clubs. At the twelfth trick some glimmering of intelligence prompted him to discard the knave and keep the 7. The dealer, who was driven into a corner, grasped at this chance, and, placing the remaining club in B's hand, discarded dummy's ace of diamonds, with the result that B made his last diamond, and won two by cards and the game and rubber.

When it was over there was a stony silence for a few moments. Then the Neophyte's partner said to him, "That 8 of diamonds of yours was rather a peculiar lead, wasn't it? Don't you generally lead your fourth best?" "Oh," he said, "I don't pay any attention to the 'book' leads. I play by the light of common sense. When I have three cards in sequence I always lead one of them, and I did it in this case. It came off all right, didn't it?" "It certainly did that," said his partner, "but at the same time it is apt to be rather misleading. When you lead from a top sequence it is usual to lead your highest." "That is the worst of you ultra-scientific players," said the Neophyte; "you play too much by rule." Then, turning to the dealer, he proceeded to explain the situation. "If I had been in your place, now, I should have made sure of winning the game when I could see it on the table, without trying any experiments. I always believe in winning the game when one can." The disconsolate dealer answered not a word. Any attempt at explanation was quite beyond him. The Neophyte not only had the best of the argument but the best of the settlement also; still I do not fancy that, if he plays bridge much in good company, he is likely to find it a very profitable pastime.



How Wild Beasts are Caught for the Zoo.

By A. W. Rolker,

Author of "Babies of the Zoo," etc.

THE business of the modern wild animal dealer is much like that of any other tradesman—he takes his orders from all the points of the compass, and sends his agents, or trappers, to the four quarters of the globe to fill the commissions. These sturdy, courageous hunters, braving fevers and privations and unafraid of man, beast, or devil, penetrate lands and wildernesses where no white man's foot has stood before. They reach into Nature's storehouse of forest, swamp, and jungle, snaring, hunting, trapping, and kidnapping the strange, wild captives seen in our menageries. The work of these adventurous men, who sometimes enlist entire villages of savages to aid, is an interesting chapter, being an account of the earliest history of the different species of our wild beast friends.

Among the easiest victims of the wild animal trapper of to-day are the very species commonly supposed the most dangerous—those most fascinating of all ferocious beasts, the big cat animals. Time was when even those miracles of strength and agility, the tawny lion and his faithful mate, were betrayed into pitfalls and, snarling and broken-hearted, were ignominiously jolted from the interior towards the coast, hundreds of miles over ruts and stones, in rude wagons drawn by scores of howling, yelling Kaffirs

But in these days the experienced trapper rarely tries for adult beasts. Like the stock-raiser, he looks upon a grown pair of lions as his assets—not to be slaughtered unless in the necessity of self-defence, nor to be taken at risk of death in captivity, but to supply him at intervals with fine young whelps. With but little chance of failure these cubs may be reared. Neither wagons nor hosts of savages are required to transport them. Cuddling close, sleeping much, and imbibing goats' milk through rubber-nippled bottles, they may be carried in arms or in baskets throughout an overland journey of a thousand miles or more.

To steal a litter of lion cubs is not so difficult a feat as might be supposed. In the heart of the deepest, darkest tangle of cane, thorn, and bushrope, the lion mother has worked a clearing and scratched and gathered a nest of leaves and grass upon which to bed her young. Here the yellow babies lie, huddled and mewing, or sprawling over one another in kitten play, while the anxious mother, fawning close beside her magnificent lord and master, lies, chin on forepaws, eyes closed, and ears alert and twitching. Not in the wide world, it would seem, was family ever so protected. And yet, safely hidden in a thicket to leeward, where no wind can carry the strong human scent, recognisable to almost every warm-blooded creature except man himself, the trapper is hard at work. Beside him is a pair of Kaffir hunters with his guns and repeating rifles, and hour after hour the men sit silently until the lion parents, unsuspicious of impending danger, depart to hunt for their meal. Often, as a preliminary, the male lion lowers his nose toward the ground and emits that terrifying, reverberating bass roar that strikes panic to the hearts of all living things within earshot and startles them to a betraying flight—the very object of the roar, it is supposed. The crack of a dried twig sounds sharply; scarcely more than as if wafted by a sudden breeze the brush and bushes rustle and part, and with kingly head uplifted and nostrils scenting, the magnificent monarch steps, soft-padded and noiseless, through the thicket, followed by his regal spouse.

One hour, two, and even three may pass before the lions have struck down their buck; and the kidnappers, making sure only that the formidable beasts have gone, move to their robbery. On hands and knees, creeping and crawling as only experienced hunters can, noiseless and ever ready for sudden attack, the men progress through the maze of cane and vine and bush until they come to the thicket where the young ones lie asleep. They may be kittens, with eyes scarcely more than open, and may be picked up and bagged before they can stagger away on tiny legs; or they may be four-week-old whelps, lively and frisky, showing their inborn hatred of man by spitting and trying to scratch when picked up in arms. Four, five, even six young lions may be gathered up in this way to be borne to the nearest station and raised in captivity, while out of the depths of the jungle, deep into the night, roll the rumbling challenges of the bereaved parents.

Frequently it happens that the cubs are grown so tall that the family has left its lair, and the lithe, yellow mother, at this stage often deserted by her mate and more alert and ferocious than ever, emerges grim, gaunt, and sinewy, her sturdy cubs playing and tumbling about her. If such a family is located, unless the mother is trapped by pitfall, she must be killed either by the white man's bullet or by a hurricane of the Kaffirs' assegais before a desecrating hand may rest upon her babes, who, the protectress dead, are easily run down and roped or snared.

How a lion is caught by pitfall is best told in connection with the trapping of tigers, those magnificent, huge, orange-black-striped felines that equal the lion in size, strength, and agility, and certainly excel him in ferocity, elegance of form, grace of movement, and splendour of skin. Infinitely more bloodthirsty and daring than the lion, the adult-caught tiger is less proud and sensitive than his magnificent half-brother, and less apt to die owing to captivity. For this reason, and because of facilities for safely transporting these heavy, mighty beasts to near-by seaports, the monarch of India is frequently trapped even when full grown.

Into the heart of the tiger district the intrepid hunter plunges, news of his coming mysteriously flying ahead of him from village to village, where natives are only too anxious to decry the cattle-killing marauder. But how to capture one of these suspicious, treacherous, seven-hundred-pound cats, and cage him or else lead him through a hundred or more miles of jungle, is a problem that might puzzle anyone but an East Indian or a wild animal trapper. The trap, known as a "pitfall," is excavated within convenient distance of the tiger lair, and near a watering-place, where footprints betray where the animal drinks. Not far from here, in the densest tangle of cane and creeper thicket, where no sun-ray ever pierces, lies the culprit in his forbidding home. The dry, brown grass is pressed and matted where he has stretched himself. Dark orange hairs, short and shiny, shed from the gorgeous coat, lie thickly here and there. Skulls and bones, delicate and thin, stout and heavy, are strewn about. In a corner is the rust-red mark where the most recent victim—a bullock, judging by the horns—was dragged. The trapper sits, rifle across knees, and eyes and ears strained for a surprise, while two brown men sink the "pitfall" wherein the beast will be decoyed to hurl himself. Down goes the huge, bottle-shaped hole, ten feet deep, ten feet in diameter at the base and seven feet across at the surface, while a third native weaves cane and bamboo into network to cover the gaping mouth of the trap. A kid with a stone tied to it is secured to the middle of the frail cover, which is then shoved across the opening.

The unfortunate kid bleats piteously as the men withdraw. Far into the jungle the mournful sound penetrates almost incessantly—for hours, sometimes for several days, before the lazy slayer stirs. Then he comes, noiseless as a shadow. The thickest cane, through which it seems only a hare could squirm, the lithe, magnificent beast pierces without the rustling of a leaf. Guided by sound and scent he approaches nearer and nearer, white belly to the ground. Whether attacking man or beast, his attack is a surprise and a spring. He could advance in the open and outdistance even the fleetest buck in a few bounds; but this is not the nature of the beast, even when attacking a tethered kid. Crouching low, nervous quivers running across his specklessly groomed skin, and eyes gleaming, he aims. A crash—the great body describes a long, wide arc, and with a snarl he lands on his prey, dashing headlong, kid, network, and all, into the dark pit. Surprised, frightened, and maddened, the trapped brute unreasonably fights right and left, tearing the kid, splintering the fatal network, and attacking the walls of the pit. When his first fury is expended he espies the opening overhead. With all the experience and cuteness and wonderful agility of the beasts of his family, he estimates and tries to spring out of the hole; but the overhanging walls lend no foothold, the feat being even more difficult than that of a man jumping out of a hogshead. Again and again the animal springs, bringing down clawfuls of dirt and stone, until he begins to be exhausted, and, snarling, paces his narrow prison, seeking an exit.

But a tiger in a pitfall is a tiger only half-caught. The problem is to pull him out of his predicament and to market him. Often, especially in pitfalls dug for lions, a gigantic mouse-trap is placed in the pit, so that the animal falls directly into the stout cage, when the doors relentlessly snap after him. In that case, trap, captive, and all are simply pulled out of the pit, the animal having caged itself. But the East Indian prefers a more spectacular method for noosing his tiger. A net of rattan ropes, stout beyond all tearing and ten feet square, is thrown into the pit, and the tiger, frenzied with the sound of voices and the mysterious thing thrown at him in semi-darkness, attacks it furiously, biting and

tearing. One after another his paws poke through the meshes and he rolls and tosses and jumps and squirms, amid ear-splitting snarls and angered cat-cries, becoming more and more tangled with every attack, and fighting more desperately as the coils tighten about him, until he lies still, having bound himself head and paw. Then the tiger trapper descends into the pit and passes ropes and slings around the splendid body, which is hauled to the surface and, oftenest, lifted into a cage on wheels. Generally, the net is then severed and the tiger unbound, while the cage trundles to market. If the captive is an extraordinarily vicious beast, however, he remains fettered until locked in

"WITH A SNARL HE LANDS ON HIS PREY, DASHING HEADLONG, KID, NETWORK, AND ALL, INTO THE DARK PIT."

a permanent cage. Frequently a tiger is actually *led* to market. A rattan collar having been woven around the beast's neck, a pair of twenty-foot ropes are attached to the opposite sides of this. Then each rope is manned by hunters, who, while proceeding, pull against each other in a continual tug-of-war, the tiger being as powerless as if riveted to the middle of an iron bar.

Interesting though the work of the wild animal trapper is while hunting the big felines, at best it is retail compared to hunting expeditions when white men enlist entire Kaffir villages to scour the deserts and jungles

of Africa for one of the big "drives," by which are caught zebra, giraffe, buffalo, antelope, and many species of deer often seen in our menageries. Preliminaries to this extensive hunt, in which from one thousand five hundred to two thousand Kaffirs participate, often require weeks of preparation. An enormous circular stockade, ten feet high and a mile in diameter and equipped with a huge, V-shaped entrance, opening one or two miles across from point to point, is erected. Like an endless black snake, the regiment of hunters threads through the wilderness, travelling hours into the heart of the hunting-ground, where the line of men is turned to a gigantic horseshoe, four or five miles across the open ends. Stumbling, breaking, and crashing through the thicket the human drag-net advances, sweeping everything in front into the stockade. So dense is the vegetation that only now and then a glimpse of the startled game may be seen. Fragile and graceful, a herd of a hundred antelope appears in the distance, dashing for dear life over a knoll in the fateful direction. The long, slim necks of giraffes may be discerned towering high above the cane and grass, the fleet-footed animals racing at breakneck speed, with a herd of startled zebras trampling a wide swath, mown like a road. Everywhere, as if pursued by fire, the wild creatures flee at the mysterious, terrifying din from two thousand savage throats and the clanking of shields and spears by as many pairs of knotty arms. And, finally, as the van of the drive enters the arms of the V and the fleeing beasts may be seen, the racket is increased a hundredfold. Antelope, eland, deer, buffalo, giraffe, zebra, ostrich, and even a rhinoceros or two may be seen running in panicky fright amid hyenas, jackals, leopards, and even lions, the beasts forgetting common enemies in the flight for life which is upon all.

Running at top speed, swinging shields and spears and yelling like demons, the Kaffirs close in, driving the laggards into the opening, while the animals behind crowd those in front into the huge circle, where there is a Noah's ark of confusion. On and on drive the Kaffirs. Here a buffalo or a jaguar realizes the trap ahead and turns on his pursuers, but a shower of assegais or the crack of a white man's rifle ends the dispute, and the ebony drivers, panting and dripping sweat, rush onward, leaping over beasts crushed or maimed, until the last is in the stockade.

Time was when the Kaffir killed every creature so trapped. But in these days the white man has taught his black brother to be provident, and those beasts required by the trappers are only lassoed, while the largest ones of use to the Kaffir are speared or shot, the rest of the captives being released.

As might be expected, among the most dangerous animals to capture are those huge beasts, the pachyderms; and one of the most difficult of these to get is that three-ton, waddle-legged picture of stumpy awkwardness, the hippopotamus. To capture, cage, and transport one of these giants up and down hill, over rocks and stones and fallen tree trunks, through hundreds of miles of virgin forest, is manifestly impracticable. It is the baby "hippo," the chubby, pink, bumpy-faced little calf, which the trapper kidnaps after a momentous duel with its mother.

About the surest way of catching one of these calves is by the spectacular native method of harpooning the colossal parent, which, aroused and in its element, is one of the most formidable antagonists among wild animals. The expedition consists of five or six canoes each containing two hunters and a harpooner, the former to propel the vessel and to guide and look after the rope, once the man with the lance, standing in the bow, has hurled his murderous weapon. The harpoon is a ponderous thing. The shaft, of hardwood, is ten or twelve feet long, terminating in a one-foot, iron, spear-shaped head supplied with a barb.

Not a word is whispered; not even the swish of a paddle is heard as the fleet drifts toward the unsuspicious animals. The sounds of the grunting, snorting, and splashing giants come from ahead. Like so many water-rounded rocks the wet, dark backs of the beasts become visible, and ever and anon one of these disappears, to rise at a considerable distance.

Diving from the broad neck of a big cow, a queer little caricature of a hippopotamus may be seen as, frightened, it jumps into the water. The mother is a marked victim. On glide the canoes, their naked, black crews worked to the highest pitch of excitement. The boats enter the midst of the herd, which, heads submerged, is still unconscious of danger. Steadily the nearest canoe bears down on the cow. The harpooner arises cautiously, tall and sinewy, and steadies his lance. Not until the frail craft almost touches the thick skin does he let drive. Then, with every ounce of might, he sinks the point of the forty-pound lance deep into the beast's

back and drops into his seat to paddle. A rush, a splash, and up comes the huge, dripping head of the wounded hippopotamus with a squeal of pain and fright, while the water reddens and the shouts and yells of the men mingle with the startled cries of the other "hippos" as splashing they flee in alarm. The cow dives to the river bottom, darting right and left to free herself of the paddle-wheels of a small steamer, the cow suddenly turns short to the attack. One root of the frightful head or a single thrust with a tusk, and a canoe is upset, side torn out, bottom stove in, or broken into halves, while the infuriated animal seizes the floundering men, crunching them to pulp between the dull, broad grinders of its tremendous jaws—a frightful death which

"ONE ROOT OF THE FRIGHTFUL HEAD OR A SINGLE THRUST WITH A TUSK, AND A CANOE IS UPSET, SIDE TORN OUT, BOTTOM STOVE IN."

iron so relentlessly fastened in her thick hide, and, like whalers playing a whale, the blacks pay out rope or haul in slack in the long-drawn fight of tiring out the immense creature.

Rarely at this stage does the cow attack. With a snort of fright she darts off, churning the dark water white, emitting squeals of pain, and towing the boat at a surprising pace in a vain effort to escape. Not until after an hour or more of the most violent exertion does strength fail and fight begin. With bloodshot eyes, mouth wide open, head uplifted, and the great forefeet churning the water like the overtook Gustave Hagenbeck, brother of the well-known animal dealer and trainer. Often the attack is so vicious that the rope, fastened to a buoy, must be thrown overboard while the men flee, picking up the buoy only after the beast has exhausted herself.

As the beast fails the end of the rope is carried ashore, a "turn" is taken around a tree, and slack is hauled in on the struggling animal until it is brought into shallow water, where, for the first time exposing a vital shoulder, a well-aimed shot or a shower of assegais brings the fine cow down. Then the baby, which, frightened out of its wits, has

been floundering and squealing in its mother's wake, is picked up, caged, and borne to the hunter's head-quarters, where for six or eight months it is fed on goats' milk, until old enough to be sent oversea, the idol of hundreds of thousands of sightseers.

Strange though it may seem, one of the most easily trapped animals is the largest, most powerful, and most intelligent of them all—the elephant. In India, the home of the elephants seen in our menageries, as many as one hundred and twenty of those ponderous, grey, lumbering beasts have been trapped at the same time; while captured herds, numbering forty, sixty, and even eighty—bulls, cows, and calves—are the rule rather than the exception.

The most spectacular and ingenious method of hunting elephants is by *kheddah* or stockade, used by the Government elephant-catching stations in India. The sight of a hunting party from one of these stations is an inspiring one, even as an army moving to the front. In the van are the dozen or score of *koomkies*—those biggest, tallest, and most majestic high-caste elephants, on whom will fall the brunt of the battle. Stripped of every superfluous strand, the fine beasts lumber through the jungle, trunks swaying, tusks glistening, white-turbaned mahouts sitting astride the ponderous necks. Behind the *koomkies* follow as many low-caste elephants—beasts of burden, laden with ropes, axes, shovels, picks, and the hundred and one implements needful to an army of twelve hundred or two thousand brown beaters who follow afoot, armed with horns, tom-toms, matchlock guns, and other ear-splitting instruments. And yet this extraordinary gathering is not all. Miles ahead, in the maze of jungle, a hundred of the most skilful trackers have been at work for weeks locating a herd to notify the chief elephant catcher where to set out. At the appointed place the head tracker and the catcher meet, and as the expedition nears the game all is silence. For the time even the *koomkies* and the pack elephants are left behind, and only the beaters are led to the front.

Cautiously, with hardly a betraying sound and as only East Indian bushmen can tread their way through thicket, the men, armed with their horns and tom-toms, press forward through cane and creeper and underbrush, jumping rocks and fallen tree-trunks, and travelling in a mile-diameter circle until the herd of scrawny, ill-fed, grass and mud plastered giants has been surrounded. So silently and quickly do these trained men work that not until almost the last link in the chain has closed do the huge, shy brutes scent trouble, become restive, lumber right and left, and rend the stillness with their scalp-raising trumpet screams. Thoroughly startled, the animals investigate, and the herd of hillocks forges ahead, drawing nearer and nearer a point in the circle, when suddenly, as though sprung out of the ground, an unearthly din of howls and yells and cries, accompanied by the racket of horns and tom-toms, sends the beasts scurrying in the opposite direction, where presently they meet the same experience. Absurd though it may seem, this aggregation of might and strength, which could override an enemy ten times as strong as the puny tormentors, is held in check by a circle of fear. Again and again the line is assailed, the fine, naturally docile brutes becoming more and more puzzled with each repulse, until after hours of fruitless effort they huddle close in the centre of the circle, an excited, frightened, animated avalanche, requiring the most careful nursing for fifty or sixty miles through the broad forests to prevent stampeding over the human chaff.

If a herd happens near a former *kheddah* the elephants are carefully driven into the big stockade, where they are overwhelmed by the *koomkies*, one after another. But oftenest the stockade is built around the encircled animals, the sounds of picks, shovels, axes, saws, and fallen trees enduring day and night by the weird orange flames of the beaters' fires, who thus hold the beasts within the circle until the monstrous fence of tree trunks rears ten feet or more high. Even this protection would be as nothing were one of the beasts left to try his strength; but outside the stockade a line of beaters is maintained to keep watch with the terrifying din of blank charges and tom-toms so soon as a point in the stockade is threatened.

Only when the last pile has been driven or set the real capture begins with the *koomkies*, those splendid rascals who once roamed the jungle themselves, and who take visible delight in pushing, shoving, butting, prodding, and bullying their former colleagues into submission. Tall, majestic, and self-reliant, the fine animals stride into the arena guided by their mahouts, each beast bearing from six to ten native elephant-catchers, who cling to the backs of their mounts by a network of ropes which enables them to descend to work or to ascend out of danger, like so many monkeys. For it is a curious fact that only rarely will an elephant attack a man mounted on another elephant. Generally, the *koomkies* are made

to work in pairs. The sight of six pairs of elephants simultaneously at work capturing a half-dozen struggling, trumpeting mates is an imposing one. Like a pair of animal policemen arresting a prisoner, the great beasts sidle alongside a victim, take him between them, and jostle and squeeze and worry him, tail first, toward a tree. Every inch is contested by the herculean fighters, until nearing a stout tree or stump the little

"EVERY INCH IS CONTESTED BY THE HERCULEAN FIGHTERS."

brown elephant-catchers slide from their mounts to the ground, crawl under the ponderous bellies and shuffling, kicking feet, slip cable slings about a hind foot, and take a turn around a tree. Back staggers the victim, butted, prodded, and bullied farther and farther, the men taking up slack until the great, grey leg is tied hard and fast against the tree, where the captive is left, struggling and panting in despair, to see the herd fettered one after another.

The capture of only one other species belonging to the big pachyderms remains to be described—that of the ponderous yet fleet and agile savage of viciousness, the rhinoceros. As in the case of its near relative, the hippopotamus, it is impracticable to transport this active, five-thousand-pound beast through virgin wilderness to the sea-coast—at least, until some railroad opens the heart of the continent. It is the mother with a little calf that is wanted, and she, unfortunately, must be killed before the baby may be stolen. How, occasionally, a "rhino" is rounded up has been described, but nowadays the beasts are becoming too scarce, even in Abyssinia, the favourite home of the animals, to be relied on for supplying the market, unless by direct hunt. In fact, so rare are these interesting creatures that some species are supposed extinct. However, in Abyssinia, as well as in many other countries, natives have learned to anticipate the coming of the white trappers, and frequently this ferocious beast, capable of impaling a horse with a single blow, is laid low and robbed of her calf by the crude weapons of the savage.

Three hundred dusky hunters, armed only with assegais and huge two-handed swords, take part in the hunt. Deep into the wilderness, skirting rivers and swamps where the "rhino" loves to wallow in mud, the trapping expedition penetrates until recent spoors and the deep, wide track of the big beast and the footmarks of her calf are struck. Stealing forward the hunters advance, stealthily enclosing the two animals in a circle. The snapping of twigs marks the spot where the cow is plodding beside her calf, and the breaking of cane and brush is heard as the little one moves about noisily, while with a grunt of contentment the cow splashes into

a wallow, only to struggle to her feet with incredible speed. The tiny rhinoceros-birds, those faithful little feathered guardians who, sitting on the backs of these pachyderms, feed on parasites, and in return give alarms of danger, are fluttering uneasily. And now the wonderful scent of the cow forewarns her. Down goes the big, overhanging lip toward the ground. The dangerous horns are tilted forward. Brush, cane, and bushes crack, and with remarkable agility and frightful impact the beast charges doggedly, snorting and grunting with rage, and tearing all in her path. Straight towards the nearest hunter she charges. The trained savage jumps aside, strikes against a hind leg just above the foot, and with a snap a tendon parts, making the limb useless. Limping on three legs, the cow turns like lightning, but—"hough!"—a second snap, and the crippled animal stands rooted to the spot, at the mercy of her enemies, who a little later track the frightened calf and transport it to captivity to await the coming of the white man, the wild animal agent, who pays in silver, in glass beads, in gaudy calicoes, and copper wire.

One of the most interesting captures the wild animal trapper makes is that of the crocodile — that dreaded, voracious, man-eating river hyena which infests Asia and

"LIKE DOWN IN A GALE THE MEN SCATTER, SOME KNOCKED PRONE AS THE MIGHTY BODY BRUSHES BY."

and with yells and cries of excitement the hunters bear down as the cow turns to charge, this time at a group of men who draw the beast's attention. Like down in a gale the men scatter, some knocked prone as the mighty body brushes by. But another group of tantalizers is ahead, and as the fierce cow charges—"hough!"—a sword

Africa. In North Africa, where this long, squatty, black, horn-hided creature of mouth and teeth attains a length of twenty-two feet, native hunters catch the frightful antagonist with their bare hands.

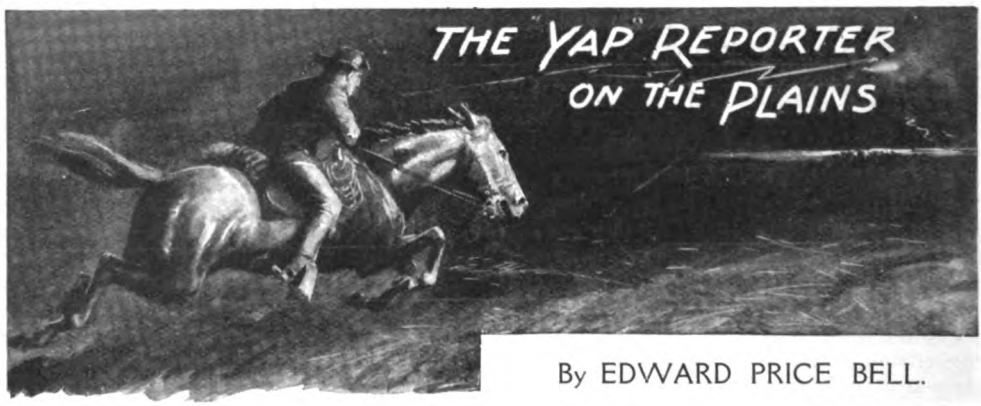
During the cold season, when the tepid waters of the blue-grey rivers have been nipped with the chill of night, the long,

yellow-eyed faces of the monsters appear on the surface of the water, and lazily the endless, knotty-skinned animals drag themselves high up on the sand-hills to sleep and bask in the warm sun. Sprawling over one another in heaps, like tangled tree-trunks, the saurians lie for hours without the least sign of life—ready victims for the trapper; for on land this beast is but a timid, cowardly creature until attacked. Only then the vicious, mighty animal, handicapped by fighting out of its own element, develops a mine of boundless fury. Impelled by the lowest order of intelligence, which once aroused knows no fear, the animal flings itself at the enemy, never ceasing attack until the last breath of its wonderfully tenacious life has been exhausted.

Drifting down river on rafts, the crocodile trapper and a score of native hunters noiselessly approach the shore to intercept the flight of the slumbering reptiles into the river. From afar, by means of field-glasses, the victim has been singled out. Not until the rafts grate upon the sand are the semi-torpid beasts aroused. Wild, fierce squirming, the shuffle of scurrying feet and dragging bodies, and with mouths wide open, squatty legs scraping and long tails dragging, each is in flight, scrambling and sprawling and splashing in full retreat headlong over embankments into the river. Only the flight of the victim has been intercepted. Armed with long poles the hunters prod and beat the crocodile, which, realizing that its only safety is in the river, refuses to be driven inland, while the men aim simply to goad the reptile to attack.

Sweeping wide arcs with its monstrous, death-dealing tail the infuriated saurian darts forward, only to meet a blow across the nose that would fell a bull. But life takes hold of every bone and shred and fibre in the monster's body, and the injury but maddens it to further attack, while the hunters fight in what seems a most reckless manner. Still, always barring the threshing, ten-foot tail that would bring down an ox like a trip-hammer, there is little danger from the crocodile ashore. A man could outrun the reptile and its frightful battery of conical, needle-pointed teeth that would snap one in halves like a pipe-stem. Prodding, butting, and beating, the unequal fight is continued for a half-hour or an hour—until, with the first show of exhaustion, a terrific blow across the broad, hideous head momentarily stuns the fighter. In an instant, then, the hunters are on top of the beast, sitting astride the body, lying across its tail, and pinning every inch of the herculean frame to the ground, while in a twinkling the trapper has slipped ropes about each ankle, draws the legs back, and secures them around the body, rendering the reptile practically helpless. A rope is slung around the wide-open jaws, and these are drawn together and tied shut, while with every lash of the big tail the unfooted monster rolls over and over until, self-exhausted, he lies still. Then the poles are stretched alongside the animal, and its two-hundred-and-fifty or three-hundred-pound body rolled upon them and lashed around and around, and—there lies one of the fiercest of all menagerie captives, trapped and harmless as a baby.

"THERE LIES ONE OF THE FIERCEST OF ALL MENAGERIE CAPTIVES, TRAPPED AND HARMLESS AS A BABY."



By EDWARD PRICE BELL.

"WHO *is* Cherokee Bill?" asked Helen, propping up the blue-eyed boy, kicking and sputtering, on the bed, and drawing open the square mouth of Riall's brown leather handbag.

"Briefly," replied the correspondent, standing, hands in his pockets, near his wife's side, "he is the king of red criminals. You know, Helen, nations make treaties with nations, but nations, as a rule, do not make treaties with individuals."

"Ah!" returned Helen, smiling.

"That is so," Riall continued, also smiling; "but in the case of Cherokee Bill a nation has made a treaty with a man. First this man preyed only upon the white people. Then, the reconciliation between the white and red races beginning, he preyed also upon the Indians, particularly harrying, robbing, and slaying his own tribesmen. Nobody has been able to take him, and at last the Cherokee Government, at its wits' end, has concluded a compact with him, the nation forgiving all his crimes, and Cherokee Bill agreeing to come in from the forest and be a good Indian."

"But," questioned Helen, "will the United States Government absolve this desperado?"

Riall shrugged his shoulders.

"At any rate, you are to interview him?" half soliloquized the young wife, setting to work to pack the bag.

"If he isn't too quick with his scalping-knife."

Helen shot a startled look at her husband.

"Now, don't get alarmed," begged Riall. "If Cherokee Bill wants the right of way, I'll let him have it."

"But are you never to stop running into danger?" exclaimed Helen. "Are you to be for ever flying off, leaving sonny and me alone in this big town—leaving me to wait sleeplessly for you, my heart bounding into my mouth at every sound on the stair? The Chippewa war, the race riots—they were awful nightmares to me! The Indian Territory, I hear, is a very terrible place—Indians, negroes, and white men always embroiled in deadly strife."

"My darling," said the correspondent, taking her tenderly into his long, sinewy arms, "with all my heart I sympathize with you. It is for you and sonny that I go—you and sonny, who are in my thoughts all day and in my dreams all night. Never have I had an assignment, Helen, in which you and sonny did not play the most important part."

Soundly she kissed him on the lips.

"To interview Cherokee Bill," he went on, "is the managing editor's command, and not for the 'Yap' reporter is it to pick and choose. Like the soldier, he gets an order to move, and instantly he moves. But this unsettled life, these risks, are for only a little time; one day, with God's help, I'll be my own master, and when I am I'll stick tight to the brown-eyed girl and the blue-eyed boy. Put all your money on that!"

At two in the morning, in the mellow

nightlight, Helen fed the baby, her black hair falling loose and luminous on her snowy gown. Feebly pulsed the great city. Previously by some hours Riall had loaded his six-shooter, slipped a bowie knife into his inside coat pocket, taken his brown leather bag, and gone away. Wide open, the big blue eyes of the boy dwelt upon the face of his mother.

"Sweet sonny," said Helen, "do you not know that all journalists are cast in an unheroic mould? Has not this legend reached even your pink little ears? All my life *I* have heard it. Low-grade fellows, irreverent, dissolute, uncultured, untruthful, sneering at high deeds of principle, cold towards all really glorious phases of character——"

Wider opened the blue eyes, strangely curious grew the cherub face.

"My lovely boy," whispered the mother, cuddling him close to her heart, "don't you believe this evil story; it is a monstrous calumny!"

Dust-smirched and jaded, behind him twenty-four hours' fast travelling, Riall got out of a Pullman car on to a long, wide plank platform, crowded with shirt-sleeved men of almost every hue of skin—pure Caucasians, full-blooded red men, yellow Chinese, coal-black negroes, neutral-coloured mixed breeds. Night was falling, and the correspondent's attention was divided between the motley throng on the platform and the aspect of the weather. As for the people, never before had he seen frames so wiry, faces so lean, eyes so piercing, miens so furtive and vigilant. As for the weather—the sky an angry yellow, the wind coming in sharp, frequent puffs, each blast more forcible than that before it—Riall was awed by its extraordinary and ominous strangeness.

At the station hotel, which he reached after a stiff bout with the wind, Riall had just written his name in the register when he was handed a telegram from the managing editor, stating that the Washington Government had ordered an immediate move to capture Cherokee Bill, and requesting the *Morning Star* man to "work with all possible dispatch." The telegram added that it appeared to be the purpose of the authorities to send the marshals and soldiers down on the north-west border of the Indian Territory.

"Then the scene of action," muttered Riall, bitterly, "is fifty miles across the prairie."

Deeply absorbed in his problem, yet his thoughts kept turning to the storm. It had begun to shriek. Occasionally the hotel trembled. Strong men gathered at the windows, pale and ill at ease. Striding towards the door, his face a painful study, Riall felt again the old tyrannous terror of the "Yap" reporter—the terror of defeat.

"What do you want for him?" cried the correspondent, bursting into the storm and bounding down the steps to where a tall plainsman had alighted from a bronco.

"Little Steam Engine?" shouted the plainsman, bracing himself against the wind and glaring at Riall.

"Yes, if that's his name. What'll you take for him—saddle, bridle, equipment, and all—likewise those spurs?"

"Blest if this ain't suddent!" exclaimed the Westerner. "What's wrong with y', kid?"

"Nothing," said Riall. "I want to cross the prairie quickly, and need a pony. What's your price?"

"Why, bust me!" cried the plainsman, "I'd ruther sell my right arm!"

"Hire him to me, then," cried Riall. "Here's two hundred dollars"—the bills buzzed in the wind—"keep it till I come back, and charge me what you like!"

From earliest boyhood at home on horseback, Riall grasped the rein and swung into the saddle.

"By Heaven!" exclaimed the amazed owner of Little Steam Engine, unbuckling his spurs, "y' may be crazy, but y're game! Two days' rations in the roll behind y', and under y' the toughest, swiftest brute in the Territory."

Standing out upon the prairie, the trail stretching away to the north-west, Riall and Little Steam Engine found themselves pitted against a doughty antagonist. The rider drew his hat tight over his head and buttoned his coat to the neck. The wind, in nautical phrase, was on their port beam Coming now, for the most part, in a steady gale, it ironed the long grass close to the earth—flat, motionless, glistening. Only the man and the bronco stood up, and the air countered with clamorous and staggering pugnacity. Leaning heavily to windward, Riall clove close to Little Steam Engine. When the pony, swept off the trail by an irresistible blast, started to scud, Riall righted him with a savage dig of the rowel and twist of the scissor-bit.

"If it gets no worse," thought the correspondent, striking a comparative calm, in which the bronco shot forward at lightning speed, "I may be in at the 'killing' yet."

Scanning the south-western skies, Riall

observed that their appearance was undergoing a rapid change. The peculiar yellowish glow was dying out, and in its place, over a vast segment of the horizon, was rising an inky object. The edges of this great phenomenon were wind-frayed, and its whole look gave an impression of tremendous movement. It was attended by continual ghostly flashings and vibrant mutterings. So fascinated was the journalist, so eager to see what mighty thing travelled in the wake of this splendid herald, that before he knew it the prairie had grown quite dark, the trail was blotted out. Even Little Steam Engine remained only as something resolutely and swiftly in motion beneath the saddle.

"What a beastly nuisance," thought Riall, "that this Stygian blackness should come just as the wind falls!"

Scarcely had the reflection crossed his mind when the prairie stood forth in a blinding light. Literally it was a blinding light; and yet, before it blinded, it revealed—etched out with thrilling distinctness—every detail of the plain. Hard upon the flash came the thunder—a benumbing, shattering peal that sent Little Steam Engine into the air in an ecstasy of fright. Coming at a frenzied gallop, fifty yards away, Riall beheld a group of horsemen, in compact mass, anon speaking in hoarse tones. Also, off to the left, the journalist caught a glimpse of what resembled a wave of the sea bearing down upon the fleeing plainsmen. Then again the darkness—impenetrable, overwhelming. With a great effort Riall set Little Steam Engine back upon his haunches, and the next instant swung him to his feet to the right-about. As the lightning blazed again the galloping horsemen swept abreast of the journalist, and Little Steam Engine flashed forward with the column.

In that second intense burst of light Riall took in much of the story, but not all, nor yet the gravest part. In the centre of the group of riders, on a huge black horse, sat a gigantic Indian. His face, slightly lifted, was hard set, and he stared straight ahead, the feathers about his brow extending horizontally backward and violently fluttering in the wind. His hands, holding the rein, were chained together, and on either side rode a soldier gripping a thick strap attached to the bit of the Indian's charger. Immediately in front was a third soldier, immediately behind a fourth. Vanguard, flanks, and rear were composed of civil officers, troopers, cowboys, and persons whom Riall guessed to be newspaper men. Instantly he realized that at last Cherokee Bill had fought a losing fight with his age-long enemy of the pallid skin. But what meant the blanched faces, the terrified eyes, the furious onrush of the victors in the fray?

"I say, Major!" suddenly cried a flanker on the extreme right, "they're crowdin' us on this side; we've got to swerve to the left!"

"Impossible!" yelled a horseman on the opposite edge of the column; "they're crowdin' us on this side too!"

"Straight ahead, men!" rang out the voice of the commander.

"Tell me!" Riall shouted up to a stalwart cowboy, sitting his speedy bay gelding like a bronze statue; "what's the matter?"

"Matter, pardner!" exclaimed the cowboy. "Have y' jist waked up? Th' ain't nothin' th' matter but a stampede of ten thousand bullocks!"

"Good heavens!" gasped Riall, closing upon his rein with a sterner grip and settling himself more firmly in the saddle.

In quick alternation, gleam and gloom. The lines of the lightning, zigzag, rapid, far-leaping, were almost too keen for the eye-nerve to endure. And the thunder! Synthetized from a hundred battles seemed its crash and roar. The inky cloud, stretching eager arms along the horizon, and swiftly mounting to the zenith, had veiled two-thirds of the heavens. Fading out of it was the intense colour, dashes of rain had begun to fall, and the wind was increasing in velocity. Above his head Riall could hear a fierce sibilance like that of a tempest in a ship's rigging. The force of the gale he did not feel, sheltered, as he was, by the big bay gelding and the brawny cowboy by his side. In a land of extreme meteorological eccentricity and violence, the journalist scarcely knew which to fear the more—the death-fraught elements or the storm-crazed herd.

With the sudden crowding of the horses together, as if caught in a vice, Riall recognised the advent of dire and immediate peril. At the same moment he began distinctly to hear the bellowing of the bullocks and the thunder of their hoofs. On the flanks and in the rear, already involved in the stampede, with all their might the horsemen were crying out and discharging their rifles and pistols, in a wild effort to arrest or divert the living avalanche. Little Steam Engine, under the average height, exposing him to the imminent danger of being crushed between the bronco's taller running mates, Riall got upon his knees in the saddle, and rode thus,

"THERE WAS THE THUD OF HEAVY BODIES IN CONFLICT, THE SHOUTS AND AGONIZED OUTCRIES OF MEN."

balancing himself by clinging to a blanket-ring in the cowboy's saddle-frame.

Shortly, to the right, the correspondent became aware of a desperate struggle. There was the thud of heavy bodies in conflict, the shouts and agonized outcries of men, and Riall realized that horseflesh and human might were proving unequal to the blind and

merciless charge of the brute mass. Save in front alone, on all sides the column was sore beset. From time to time a horse went down, the fall marked by a rider's smothered cry. Suddenly, breaking through on Riall's left, plunged forward a huge ox, his great horns making gory havoc. Before this frenzied onset, stridently neighing, half-a-dozen horses lunged and fell, carrying down their riders in a writhing chaos. The journalist dropped quickly into the saddle as his bronco, seizing the leeway, leapt ahead like a powder-driven missile. Home, then, Riall sank his dripping spurs. The pressure about him fell away. He stood forth unscreened against the storm. Gratefully its rude buffetings beat upon his throbbing and enfevered brow.

Suddenly appeared a huge form, forging full abreast of Little Steam Engine. The lightning gleamed, and Riall found himself in the lee, almost under the flank, of Cherokee Bill's black charger. Another flash, and the correspondent took in the Indian, his giant figure erect, his face, as before, slightly lifted and hard set, the rein still tight in his handcuffed grasp. The quartet of guards was gone; the heavy guide-reins flew loose from the charger's bit. Sounding, at this moment, to the rear, a staccato of rifle volleys, the white man and the Indian wheeled in their saddles. The remnant of the column, having quickly halted, was crouching behind a bulwark of prostrate horses and steers. Other cattle, mounting the heap, were felled with bayonet or bullet, automatically adding their bulk to the height of the defence. Heart aleap, Riall saw that the desperate measure had won—that the herd, split in twain, was rushing harmlessly by on either hand. Another moment, and the imprisoned persons had disappeared; all that rose above the storm was the deep, muffled, tremendous sound of the sea of bullocks in resistless flood.

Straight on sped Cherokee Bill and the "Yap" reporter, the latter, for the moment, riding aimlessly, the Indian riding for liberty. All at once, upon Riall's mind flashed the brightly-lit, strenuous, clattering office of the *Morning Star*. Again he heard the managing editor's measured, impressive accents: "Mr. Riall, this Cherokee Bill is no ordinary bandit; he is probably the greatest, surely the bravest, of living red-men." To Riall, temporarily benumbed, this memory came as an electric shock. "Explore his mind; reflect fully, impartially, his racial point of view." Skyward loomed the Indian, the big body pitched slightly forward, the manacled hands clutching the rein, the iron face cleaving the tumult with the steady majesty of a liner's prow. "I say!" cried Riall. "I say!" Time after time. But, quite ineffectual, his fervent exclamations were roughly beaten back by the wind.

"Behold!" abruptly shouted the Indian, for the first time relaxing his rigid posture, and turning his face upon Riall. They were entering the town from which, an hour or so before, the journalist had set out. The awesome black cloud, whipped to a spectral mist, had scudded away to the north-east, unveiling a limpid firmament, sparkling with stars. Riall had left a town of orderly streets and substantial buildings; in the soft glow of the storm-cleared air he saw a twisted and shattered waste—brick structures crumbled, frame buildings roofless and reeling, churches without spires, great columns of smoke rising from smouldering ruins, all the surviving population feverishly fighting fire, erecting shelters, tending the wounded, recovering and grieving over the dead. Riall and those with him had imagined they were in a storm, but here had been the real path of the disturbance, and the disturbance had been a narrow-based tornado.

"Behold!" repeated Cherokee Bill, looking now at Riall, now at the surrounding desolation; "the Great Spirit breathes death upon a brigand race!"

Somehow that wild cry, bursting from that great barbarian, issuing from the lips of that strangely exalted face, thrilled the "Yap" reporter to his inmost soul. Expressive, it seemed, of all the pent-up feeling, the searing resentment, of all the red men since the red man's debacle began.

"I think," muttered Riall, grimly, reining Little Steam Engine to a halt; "I think I have Cherokee Bill's point of view!"

Evidently the Indian had crossed the border of the town unwittingly, for abruptly he swung the charger round and made for the prairie. Riall watched him go, leaning rigidly forward as before, his feathers fluttering behind, his big body moving in easy unison with the movement of his mount.

"Is there a telegraph-wire standing?" asked Riall of a man hurrying past with an armful of blankets.

"Great Jupiter!" was the retort. "Th' ain't enough o' th' telegraph system left to wad a shot-gun."

"How far to the nearest railway junction point?" asked Riall, spurring the pony forward to keep up with the pedestrian.

"Twenty-five miles south-west."

"Any trail?"

"Alongside th' railroad."

"Know the extent of the disaster here?"

"Town ruined, two hundred people dead, more'n a thousand injured, an' th' count unfinished."

The next instant the paved street rang with the bronco's galloping hoofs. "Twenty-five miles," thought the correspondent; "if the wires to the east from the junction are not down, I should be able to get off my story by a roundabout route a little before midnight."

Pressing vigorously along the trail, the "Yap" had covered about half the distance to the junction, when he was seized with consternation; the swift feet beneath him were slowing down; the bronco was violently trembling. Springing off Riall peered anxiously into the pony's face. Already the head was heavy, the eyes were beginning to glaze, and a few minutes later, stretched at full length by the trail, Little Steam Engine was permanently resting from his life-long struggles and fatigues. In his sides gaped two red-lipped wounds, and as Riall looked—looked and remembered—his eyes were wet, and out of his throat broke something like a groan.

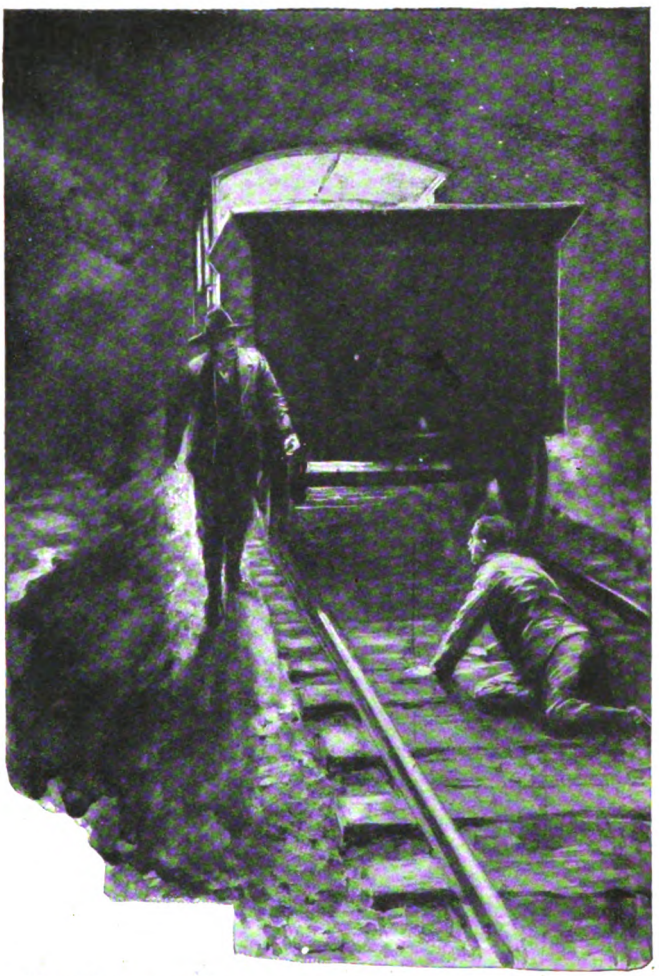
In the centre of the railway was a narrow beaten path, and along this Riall rapidly strode, refreshing himself as he went with food from the abandoned saddle-roll. Complete silence reigned on the prairie. The stairs were very beautiful; the air, blowing briskly from the west, was deliciously crisp and sweet. Drenched to the skin, sore of foot and limb, cruelly harrowed in mind, the correspondent pressed doggedly on. Some five or six miles nearer his goal, his progress was suddenly arrested by a huge freight locomotive at a standstill on the track, its lights burning, its cylinders hot, the fire aglow in the furnace, but no engineer or fireman to be seen.

"Extraordinary!" exclaimed the journalist, pushing past the engine, and finding the line empty.

"Thank Heaven for you, man!"

The exclamation came from a figure slowly crawling towards Riall between the rails.

"What's happened?" cried the correspondent. "Let me help you!" And Riall bent over the prostrate form.



"'WHAT'S HAPPENED?' CRIED THE CORRESPONDENT. 'LET ME HELP YOU!'"

"Give me a lift into the cab of the engine," and a heavy, hot hand was raised to meet Riall's ready grasp.

"S' far's I'm concerned," said the man, as Riall eased him into the engineer's seat, "it's only a broken leg. But back yander in th' tall grass, where th' train lays, is a dozen

poor fellers at death's door. Th' tornado overtook us and lifted th' train into th' ditch, twistin' it neatly off th' engine, which kept th' rails. Th' fireman, who wuz on th' tender when th' storm struck, wuz hurled fifty feet

"Then do it," said the engineer, "and we'll run back to Fort Red Stone fer help."

"Are the wires down at the junction?" asked Riall, with bated breath.

"Lord, yes," was the reply; "they wuz

"THE BALLOON POPPED HIGH INTO THE TRANSLUCENT NIGHT."

an' killed. I wuz crushed down by th' force o' th' wind, an' wuz barely able, with my broken leg, to reach th' throttle. Then I crawled back an' found th' crew in th' wreck. Can you fire?"

"Yes," cried Riall; "of course I can fire."

down when we come through, an' the real blow hadn't arrived yet."

Despair gnawing at his heart, Riall grasped the scoop and began to heave coal into the furnace. Back down the line hissed the locomotive, her fires, at the intervals of

Riall's stoking, sending a slanting yellow shaft into the night. The journalist's hat and coat were off, his sleeves rolled up, the furnace blaze, from time to time, beating fiercely in his face. The figure of the engineer, partly out of the window, bulked huge in the corner of the cab, his great hairy hand on the throttle, his grey eyes gleaming like steel along the track.

"Done!" he said, suddenly, drawing in his head, closing the throttle, and applying the brakes.

"Right at the top o' th' hill, you'll find the fort. Tell 'em to come quick."

Seizing his hat and coat, Riall sprang from the engine, and made his way up the hill as rapidly as the darkness and steepness would permit. It was hard going, and the journalist was crestfallen and fagged. He seemed to stumble into all the holes in the hill, and once he was so bruised that he felt like lying still, going to sleep, and forgetting. But there was the engineer with the broken leg, and the poor fellows in the wreck. So he struggled up and climbed ahead. Suddenly he came upon a flat space, under the shadow of the fort wall—a scene of great animation, soldiers moving busily about with lanterns, and someone resonantly giving orders.

"With this breeze," said the voice of command, "you should be at Little Rock within the hour. Get ready, men!"

Riall rushed forward with a ringing shout.

"Hold!" he cried. "Wait a second, please!"

All eyes upon him, in blank astonishment.

"I'm a *Morning Star* man," he panted. "I've just come through the tornado district. I know the whole horrible story. There's an engineer with a broken leg, in his engine, at the bottom of the hill. He wants a surgeon and medical supplies for a dozen poor fellows up the line in a wreck. He's waiting. *Let me go in this balloon!*"

Dumbfounded silence, then the commander's voice:—

"I'll see about the injured engineer and the wreck, but you mayn't go in the balloon. I can't take any such responsibility. The fort aeronaut"—Riall noted a weather-beaten Westerner, sitting quietly in the car of the balloon, as it swayed and strained at the ropes—"goes officially to report to the Government about the storm, and to ask for a rush supply of rations and tents. Stand aside, please! Ready, men?"

"Aye!"

"Cut 'er loose!"

Half-a-dozen knives flashed, and the balloon popped high into the translucent night. There had been a quick movement—a desperate leap. The car had lurched and swung round violently. And when the soldiers stared about them the "Yap" reporter was not there!

Ten a.m. in the telegraph office at Little Rock. Riall fitfully sleeping in a big revolving chair, tipped far back, his face drawn and haggard. On the table before him the remnant of a thick pad of writing paper, and a bunch of worn lead-pencils. Through his mind moving a train of vivid impressions—a balloon standing quite still; the earth swiftly falling away; the horizon rising, forming a colossal cup; the wind blowing crisply and sweetly from the west; the landscape skimming beneath; the town breaking sharply upon his view. Then a hard bump, a scurry for the wire, desperate writing, pages of "copy," the clatter of telegraph keys and sounders.

"Two telegrams, sir."

Riall awoke with a start.

"Brilliant story"—from the managing editor—"and a clean 'beat.' Deeply moved by your thrilling pluck. At the office await you a high advance in the service and a special award of five thousand dollars." Of the other message—Riall read it with a proud smile breaking the hard lines of his pinched face—more need not be divulged than the dual signature—"Helen and Sonny."

FOG STORIES

WHO shall essay to write the history of a London fog? As an institution, as travellers in other lands have so often told us, it is world-famous—more celebrated than the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral, or the Bank. And yet we who move in its swarthy or jaundiced mists find in it at most only an incitement to strong language, with nothing of the poetical or even of the humorous. There is, however, a whole world of drama bound up in the chronicles of London's fog. This misty and mysterious visitant, far older than Gog or Magog, who used to visit the watches of the night when the Metropolis barely lifted itself out of the surrounding marshes, has a fund of comedy as well as tragedy. Countless murders have been committed under its sheltering cloak, men and women have been waylaid, children have been torn from their mothers and wives from their husbands; but, on the other hand, there are not a few incidents of a less harrowing character.

On the afternoon of January 21st, 1865, during the prevalence of one of the thickest fogs for eighteen years, an extraordinary race was run for a wager of five sovereigns, which might have been attended by serious consequences. Two men, Robert Bethell and Joseph Dee, set out to run to the Royal Exchange from the Golden Cross Hotel, Charing Cross. Twelve partisans of either champion ventured to station themselves at intervals along the line of route, but only three of Bethell's supporters were ever in communication with him during the progress of the race, while seven of Dee's claimed to have hailed him as he passed. By prearrangement certain cries were raised at frequent intervals.

Both men set out at a good pace into an atmosphere of impenetrable thickness, taking the middle of the Strand, along which a number of vehicles were slowly moving, their horses led by the drivers, or utterly motionless, and the animals taken to adjacent stables. In the neighbourhood of Bedford Street the first mishap occurred, when Dee ran into a stationary hackney coach and was nearly stunned by the shock. With a bleeding face and a badly-strained wrist he arose, and at that moment heard Bethell pass him, shouting, "Clear the way!" "Fire!" and other such expressions. Bethell himself dashed into and knocked down a linkboy who was piloting an elderly gentleman across Wellington Street to Waterloo Bridge, and declares he was assaulted by the elderly gentleman, who struck him violently over the shoulders with a stick. A moment later he was nearly in the arms of a policeman. A struggle ensued. The enthusiastic sprinter wrenched himself free and plunged, as he supposed, straight on to his appointed course. Ten minutes later he found himself groping in a narrow alley. A woman's voice accosted him, and reeling in the deep gloom, faint for want of air, he asked where he was. "Cooke's Alley, Drury Lane," was the answer.

Perspiring, faint, and dispirited, with a dull pain in his chest, the fog sprinter retraced his steps southward, feeling that he had lost the race. It chanced, however, that his rival lay groaning at that moment on the kerbstone in front of Somerset House, where he had slipped and injured his leg. Although advised by one of his backers not to continue the race, Dee pluckily resolved to go on, and was attended as far as St. Clement Danes Church, where there was a bonfire, and where he again broke into a run, which lasted until, as he was informed by a constable, he had passed Temple Bar.

Exactly half an hour after setting out he

"BETHELL DECLARES HE WAS ASSAULTED BY THE ELDERLY GENTLEMAN, WHO STRUCK HIM VIOLENTLY OVER THE SHOULDERS."

found himself on the eastern side of Ludgate Circus. Bethell apparently followed him three minutes behind. At St. Paul's Dee took the wrong turning by following some torchbearers, and discovered himself in Paternoster Row, and by this means enabled Bethell to pass him. But the latter was not destined to win this remarkable race.

In the middle of Cheapside his extraordinary haste attracted the attention of a policeman, who groped his way after him with a bull's-eye lantern. The champion explained he was running a race, and must not be impeded. "Running a race!" ejaculated the constable. "Very likely! What's that in your hand?" The bull's-eye lantern was flashed on an ebony walking-stick having a massive gold head engraved with the name of a retired Army major living at Sydenham. In his haste and excitement, and a natural desire to ward off further blows, the sprinter had seized the stick of the old gentleman at Wellington Street and had clung to it unconsciously throughout his scamper through the fog. In vain he protested. The officer seized him firmly by the arm, and a few moments later Bethell had the extreme mortification to hear his rival's peculiar catcall as he groped frantically past him in the murky, choking fog of Cheapside. Dee, who had also been twice stopped by constables, was eventually the winner of the five sovereigns.

In 1783, when King George III. was on his way to the City, a dense black fog greeted him at Charing Cross. The courtiers were for turning back, but George would not hear of it. "Let us push on," he said. "Perhaps it will clear; it must clear." Incredulous and sorely averse from proceeding, the party persisted. At Temple Bar the fog actually began to lift. "This fog," said the famous John Wilkes, in His Majesty's hearing, "is a more complaisant courtier than the waves of King Canute!"

One of the most singular and entertaining incidents connected with a London fog happened on November 15th, 1855, when a link-boy at the top of Chancery Lane offered his services to a young woman to conduct her to Euston Station. The boy seemed to have a feline, a preternatural, sense of locality, for he wound his way in one of the thickest fogs for years—slowly, it is true, but surely—through alleys and thoroughfares unfrequented by pedestrians in fine weather.

According to the evidence furnished afterwards, at the corner of a street turning out of Holborn, two benighted Germans, seeing the torch and hearing the name "Euston" pronounced, joined the escort. At Red Lion Square a lady and her son, a Haileybury boy, who had given themselves up for lost,

followed the Germans as a last hope of getting into Oxford Street. A few yards farther on the schoolboy took notice of a large greyhound, which had apparently lost its master and attached itself to the party, which was shortly swelled at Southampton Row by a belated gentleman and a flower-girl, whom he had found weeping bitterly on a doorstep. At Russell Square a couple of homeless outcasts joined the procession. The progress from Chancery Lane to Euston Road occupied nearly fifty minutes. By the end of that time the fog lifted as if by magic and revealed to the astonished link-boy, who had bargained to guide a single little nursery-governess for the sum of eightpence, no fewer than twenty-nine persons who had looked to him for light and leading through the unknown terrors, pitfalls, and dangers of a London fog.

"THE FOG LIFTED AND REVEALED TO THE ASTONISHED LINK-BOY NO FEWER THAN TWENTY-NINE PERSONS."

Our readers will not need to be reminded that one of the best descriptions of a fog extant is that written by Charles Dickens in his "Christmas Carol":—

"The city clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already—it had not been light all day—and candles were flaring in the windows of the neighbouring offices, like ruddy smears upon the palpable brown air. The fog came pouring in at every chink and keyhole, and was so dense without that, although the court was of the narrowest, the houses opposite were mere phantoms. To see the dingy cloud come drooping down, obscuring everything, one might have thought that Nature lived hard by and was brewing on a large scale."

Dickens had many descriptions and anecdotes of fog, but there is one real or pretended experience of his own with which, in a burst of confidence and *à propos* of the November spectre, he once regaled his friends, which is little known. He related how he set out from Tavistock Square early one morning in a fog to see his friend Forster off to the Continent. Notwithstanding the warnings of his family, he determined to go. "Before I had gone many steps I began to be filled with misgivings, for the fog got steadily worse. No matter—I persevered. I kept one hand on the railings and the other clutching a stick, with which I incessantly and mercilessly prodded the pavement. I felt it was a pity Forster's train left so early—not even the milkmen were yet astir. Nevertheless I went on and on, as fast as I dared,

until it seemed as though I had walked miles through a mist which would have made Cimmeria and Egypt look foolish. My lungs were filled with dense black smoke. My throat and eyes smarted with fumes and cinders. Then I met a watchman, who told me that in five minutes I should be in High Holborn! My heart sank. At last my legs gave way and I sank down on a doorway. I said to myself that I would stay there until the fog lifted. How long I crouched there I do not know. The fog lifted. I opened my eyes. There was another man waiting there, too. 'Halloa!' I said. He did not reply. I don't think I ever saw a more spiritless, dejected object. He had a red, red nose, and a face — oh, so greyish white. His clothes were soiled and awry. I struggled to my feet. He struggled to his feet. I thought he would have fallen, and stretched out a hand to support him, and touched an ice-cold mirror! It was the last drop in the cup of my misery. A hackney coach passed. I hailed it, told the jarvey to drive me back to Tavistock Square, and burst into tears."

"I STRETCHED OUT A HAND TO SUPPORT HIM, AND TOUCHED AN ICE-COLD MIRROR."

Perhaps amongst a collection of fog stories the palm would be awarded to the famous one told so many times of the inebriated gentleman, or the old lady, or the fatuous Frenchman, who, on being instructed by a policeman to keep to the railings on the other side of the road for safety and guidance, crossed the street and kept to them for the space of a dozen hours or so during the entire livelong night, only to discover that he or she was circumambulating a square. It was a painful experience, and doubtless has frequently had its basis and parallel in fact.

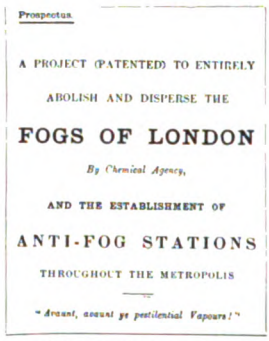
Innumerable have been the attempts to get rid of the London fog, but doubtless the most fantastic was that which appeared during the great company-promoting mania in 1847. It was proposed to form a joint-stock syndicate to destroy the fog by patent chemical means, which consisted in elevating huge rockets into the air, which, when falling, would discharge a vast quantity of spray that would instantly seize and decompose the fog particles—at least, so it may be gathered from the prospectus. The plan was that of either a madman or a swindler, and after only a few hundred pounds had been subscribed by credulous persons the project was laughed out of court.

A writer in the far forties thus describes a typical fog of that period:—

"Such of our country readers as have never been in town about this season of the year can scarcely imagine what it is to grope their way through a downright thorough London fog. It is something like being embedded in a dilution of yellow pease-pudding, just thick enough to get through it without being wholly choked or completely suffocated. You can just see through the yard of it which, at the next stride, you are doomed to swallow, and that is all. The whole city seems covered with a crust, and all the light you can see beneath it appears as if struggling through the huge yellow basin it overspreads. You fancy that all the smoke which has ascended for years from

the thousands of London chimneys had fallen down all at once, after having rotted somewhere above the clouds; smelling as if it had been kept too long, and making you wheeze and sneeze as if all the colds in the world were rushing into your head for warmth, and did not care a straw about killing a few thousands of people, so long as they could but lodge comfortably for a few hours anywhere.

"You step gingerly along, feeling your way beside the walls, windows, and doors whenever you can, until at last you tumble headlong into some cellar—perhaps on the shoulders of the little cobbler who is at work below, and who chances to have his sharp awl uplifted at the moment; or perhaps it is an underground coal-shed, and you alight on the back of the black-looking woman weighing coals and double her up in her own scale—receiving, in return, a couple of black eyes from her husband. After a hearty drubbing you escape once more into the street, and, as you cannot see a yard before you, break your shins over a milkman's can and upset the contents on the greasy pavement; he tries to collar you, but your blood is now up, and you give him a 'straight-armer,' which sends him into the area, upsetting the fat cook as he falls. You then run for it, and come full butt against the 'bow-window' of a respectable old gentleman, with whom you have a roll or two in the gutter, thankful that you did not fall on the other side and stave in the shop-front. You shake yourself, and are glad that you are as you are—for a foot beyond where you fell there yawns an open grating beneath which runs the huge sewer that empties itself into the Thames—and you wonder how many have slipped in during the day.


Prospectus.

A PROJECT (PATENTED) TO ENTIRELY

ABOLISH AND DISPERSE THE

FOGS OF LONDON

By Chemical Agency,

AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF

ANTI-FOG STATIONS

THROUGHOUT THE METROPOLIS

"*Avaunt, account ye pestilential Vapours!*"

AN ANTI-FOG PROSPECTUS.

"With great difficulty, and after many inquiries, you find a tavern; for you know no more than the man in the moon what part of London you are in. You enter a dim, cheerless room, without a fire, in which the gas burns faintly, as if unable to pierce the fleecy fog which surrounds it. You wonder whether the peg on which you hang your hat would bear your weight, and, as you lay hold of the bell-rope, cannot help trying the strength of it; the height of the ceiling also catches your eye, and you marvel that more people do not hang themselves on such a day. The very poker in the fireless grate

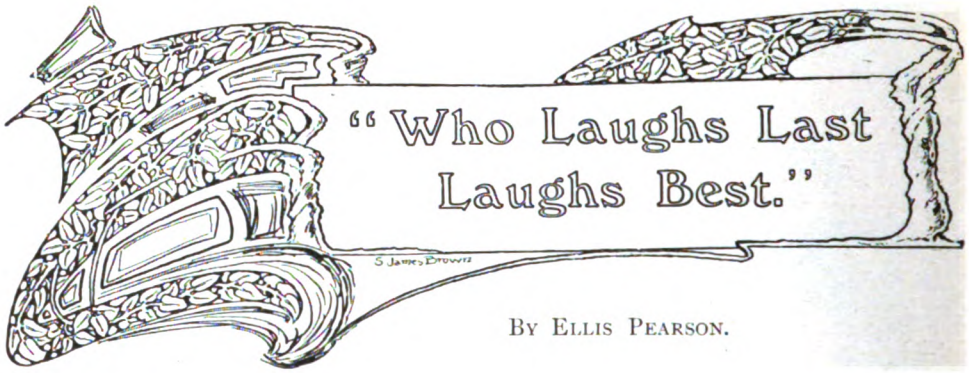
A LONDON FOG NEARLY SIXTY YEARS AGO.
From the "Illustrated London News," Christmas, 1849.

"THEY CUT WEIRD AND SPECTRAL FIGURES ON HORSEBACK."

has a cold, clammy, and murderous look; and when the waiter enters you fancy he has just been cut down."

The fog reigns in a world of its own—a world of illusions, of exaggerations, of phantasms. Many artists have been struck by this, and amongst the most recent was Mr. Harry Furniss, who some years ago actually achieved a whole series of pictures illustrating familiar fog phenomena. There was, for example, the delineation of the habitual frequenters of Rotten Row, many of whom are not to be dissuaded by any species of weather, and who cut most weird and spectral figures on horseback. Note, in addition to the vain equestrian of the first picture, the amazing proportions of the animal he bestrides. King Fog plays strange pranks! In our second selection from this unpublished collection we become aware, not for the first time, of the many moral pitfalls which await the unwary in a London fog—for how, in this bewildering smoke and brumous grime, are we to recognise the outward hall-marks, when his very lordship of Althorp might, at a distance of a yard, be a chimney-sweep in a somewhat inferior line of business?

LADY DASH MISTAKES LORD BLANK FOR A BEGGAR AND GIVES HIM A COIN.



By Ellis Pearson.

IT was late on in an afternoon in May of the year 1602 when word came from M. le Gouverneur that I was to go to him instantly in his closet. At the time I was dicing with Simon, my lieutenant, and, I recollect, had lost fifty odd crowns, but, just before the call came, luck had changed, and I was in a fair way of regaining them, so that I was more than a little reluctant to go. But duty is duty, and a few minutes later I was standing before him.

M. le Vicomte was not alone. With him was another man, dusty and travel-stained, in whom I recognised a rider who half an hour before had entered the town—Cahors—through the northern gate; the room in which we had been at play looked out on the high road from the north. The man started when his eyes fell on me, and he made a movement forward, his hand on his sword-hilt. He stared at me for a moment, a look of incredulous wonder in his eyes, then gave vent to a soft laugh. "Par Dieu!" he exclaimed.

M. le Vicomte looked from one to the other of us in surprise. I also for the matter of that was astonished, never, to my knowledge, having set eyes on the man before, and I returned his look with interest.

"What is it?" M. le Gouverneur questioned.

The stranger gave me another searching glance, then turned to him and rapidly uttered a score of words in a low voice, the nature of which I could not tell. "St. Lo! is it so?" M. le Gouverneur exclaimed; then he, too, turned and eyed me curiously. To say that I was uncomfortable would be to put it in a mild way; I was filled with an apprehension of I knew not what—needless, as will be seen—and my cheeks burned. Up to this I had said nothing; and now, as they had finished speaking, but still regarded me with curiosity, I turned to M. le Vicomte as much to cover my embarrassment as anything. "You sent for me, my lord," I said.

He nodded. "That is so, Moreau," he answered; "I have a mission for you," and took a paper the other extended to him.

He scanned the paper, then explained. Briefly put, the matter was this. It had become known to the Duc de Sully, His Majesty King Henry IV.'s right-hand man, that M. Charles de Mai, Vicomte de Salviac, a hamlet some six leagues out of Cahors, was in the conspiracy of M. de Biron with the Spanish Government against the welfare of the State, and, it was strongly suspected, was in possession of certain papers that would expose the whole affair. My mission, then, was to proceed to the Château de Salviac, arrest the Vicomte, and bring back with me any papers that I might lay hands on. M. le Gouverneur was also good enough to say that if the affair was brought to a satisfactory conclusion I might look for reward and speedy advancement.

The mission, needless to say, pleased me, tired as I was of the dreary routine of barrack life in Cahors. I hastened to say I would do my utmost, and I then asked how I should know the Vicomte.

M. le Gouverneur nodded to the stranger, who leaned forward and smiled into my face. "Had I been sent on this errand, M. le Capitaine," he said, "and come upon you I should have arrested you on sight."

I stared at him for a moment in bewilderment, not comprehending. "You mean?" I said.

"I mean," he answered, "if you look into your mirror you will see there the features and figure of the Vicomte de Salviac. You might be twin brothers."

"'I MEAN,' HE ANSWERED, 'IF YOU LOOK INTO YOUR MIRROR YOU WILL SEE THE FEATURES AND FIGURE OF THE VICOMTE DE SALVIAC.'"

I saw at once the reason why he had been so startled at my appearance, and I was filled with a wonder that can easily be imagined.

That I, a merchant's son, with no pretensions to gentility, should be in appearance like a noble of France was more than a little astonishing. And I remembered then that on several occasions when walking through Cahors I had been saluted by gentlemen whom previously I had not seen. Without doubt they had thought me to be the Vicomte.

"My faith! is it so?" I exclaimed.

"It is so," he answered, "and you should find it of the utmost use."

The same thought had occurred to me, and I nodded. Then, after receiving a few further instructions, I made my bow, and proceeding to the castle courtyard gave orders for a score of troopers to be ready in an hour's time. A few minutes later found me in my quarters with a mirror before me. If M. de Salviac were like me in appearance, then would he have a long, lean, dark face, a pair of black eyes, a thin, aquiline nose, and a wide mouth, of which the lips met in a thin line. In figure he would be tall and slimly built. That, in a few words, was what my mirror reflected, and it was by no means an ill-looking picture. I was filled with satisfaction that I should be so like a man of ancient family, for, as I have said, I myself had no pretensions to gentility.

It was about six o'clock when we rode out of Cahors. Riding at a medium rate, I made out that we should arrive at Salviac as dusk was falling, and it proved so. The sun had been set nearly an hour when we reached the top of the hill which overlooks the hamlet, and here we drew rein. It would scarcely be wise to ride straight on to the château —which, I learned from one of my men who knew the place, was a mile beyond the hamlet, hidden by a wood — for without doubt the Vicomte, since the arrest of the Maréchal de Biron, the chief mover in the conspiracy, would be on his guard, and ready to be off at a moment's notice. And it stood to reason he would have a watch set in the village. After a few minutes' thought, therefore, I bade my men remain where they were until I sent for them, and, taking with me one man only, I turned down the hill.

As we rode down I mapped out my plan of campaign and communicated it to my companion, a man who went by the name of Jean l'Ange, though he was far from being an angel in disposition, as his comrades had reason to know. Still he was a man bold and shrewd, quick to act, and thoroughly to be relied upon. He heard me out in silence, and when I had finished turned to me with a

grin. "Then you had better give me your poniard," he said.

I stared at him in amazement. "Why?" I questioned, sharply.

He grinned again. "You will have lost it," he answered, "and will send me to find it; in finding it I can tell the others to come on."

The plan was a good one and I passed the dagger over; it was a valuable one, being jewelled at the hilt. A few minutes later we were passing through the one street of the village. Doors opened on either hand as we rode slowly down, and shock-headed men and women peered out curiously. Shortly arriving at the tavern, the Red Dragon, we dismounted, and, leaving the horses in a servant's charge, entered, and with a lordly air I called for a jug of wine. The place was deserted save for a man and a woman, whom I judged to be the landlord and his mate. The man's mouth and eyes opened wide when he saw me, and the woman gave a little cry of surprise. He came quickly forward. "My lord," he began, "is anything amiss? I thought you had gone to——" then stopped and eyed me from top to toe; then, "I crave your pardon, monsieur; I thought you were my lord the Vicomte."

I affected to laugh. "And you are not the only one, master innkeeper," I said, "who has made the same mistake—that is, if you mean the Vicomte de Salviac."

He brought us our wine, staring at me in wonder. "I did indeed mean him, monsieur," he answered. "Had it not been for your clothes I could have sworn you were he."

I sipped my wine slowly, thinking rapidly. From his first words I judged that the Vicomte had been at the inn recently, but had gone. Where? That was the question. My first object must be to find out. But how? I dare not ask openly, fearing that I might put him on his guard, for it was possible he was on the look out—who more likely than an innkeeper, who saw and learned almost everything? And how I was to put my plan into operation I could not see. I was puzzling my brain what to do when he himself made matters easier for me.

"Without doubt monsieur is a relative of my lord," he said, curiously; "the likeness is amazing."

That was my chance. "Such likenesses do run in families, master landlord," I returned, "but you will have far to seek before you come across two cousins more alike than M. le Vicomte and myself."

Jean gave me a quick glance of approval, and the landlord a sigh of relief. "Then monsieur is a cousin of my lord," he said, and bowed respectfully. "Monsieur is doubly welcome to my poor house."

He had taken it as I had hoped. Posing as a relative of the Vicomte, backed by the likeness, I might naturally ask for the information I required, and he would give it without suspicion.

"M. le Vicomte is well?" I questioned.

He glanced at his wife and Jean, then came nearer to me. "My lord is well enough in body," he replied, softly, "but in mind is more than a little troubled."

I thought a minute, then nodded and bent to him confidentially. "You mean," I said, in a low voice, and in this I ventured much, "you mean the affair of M. de Biron."

He put his fingers on his lips and glanced at Jean. "He is to be trusted," I said.

He bowed. "I see monsieur knows of it. Since the arrest of M. de Biron, my lord has been in constant fear of himself being arrested. Indeed, I am to report to him if any strangers come to the village, but since monsieur is my lord's cousin"—with a smile—"he cannot be called a stranger. Perhaps," and he gazed into my face, "monsieur has news for my lord."

"It is on that very matter I am here," I replied.

He became all excitement. "Then monsieur must go to the château at once," he said; "my lord was here an hour ago to make inquiries, but on leaving said he was going back to madame."

I had now the information I required, and I gave Jean a rapid glance. "You are right," I said, "I must go to the château at once"; then, turning to Jean, "Have the horses got ready instantly," I commanded.

He finished his wine and rose, and was turning away when he affected to start, and pointed to my empty poniard sheath. "Monsieur's dagger is missing," he said.

I also affected to start, and dropped my hand on the sheath. "Curses on it!" I cried; "and a jewelled hilt! But"—as though thoughtfully—"it cannot be far, I had it on the top of the hill"; and, bending, I looked about the floor for a second or two—then, straightening myself, "It isn't here; go, rogue"—to Jean—"and see if you can find it on the road."

He scowled. "It will not be easy to find it in this light," he muttered.

I made a step towards him. "Easy or not easy," I said, "it must be found, or you

shall taste of a stirrup-leather."

He scowled again; then, muttering, passed out of the place.

I eyed the landlord and his wife closely, but neither appeared to be in the least suspicious, and I breathed freely. The man grinned when Jean's footsteps had died away.

"He is a surly rogue, monsieur," he said.

I laughed. "Surly enough," I answered, "but a good servant; I'll warrant he returns with the dagger. And now, my good man," I went on, "another jug of wine, if you please, and do you give orders for the horses to be saddled."

He drew me my wine, then passed through a doorway to the back, where I heard him assisting the other fellow with the horses. A few minutes later they led them round to the front, then the landlord rejoined me and seated himself.

"Monsieur knows the road to the château?" he inquired, respectfully; "if not, I can guide him there."

I nodded and thanked him. "I should know it," I replied, "a mile——"

'IN HIS HAND HE CARRIED THE DAGGER, AND HE HELD IT OUT TOWARDS ME.'

So far I got when he started to his feet with an exclamation and ran to the door. "What is it?" I cried, well knowing what it was.

"Horses," he answered, in a shaking voice. "Pray Heaven they do not stop here."

I joined him, and was just in time to see my own troopers ride past at a fair speed, as though in a hurry to arrive at their destination. The innkeeper drew a deep breath. "Thank Heaven," he muttered, and in silence we returned to our seats.

Five minutes later Jean joined us. In his hand he carried the dagger, and he held it out towards me. "I found it half-way up the hill," he said, surlily.

I thanked him; then the innkeeper turned on him quickly.

"Those riders," he said, abruptly, "did they pass you?"

Jean scowled at him. "They did," he replied; "they stopped me and asked if they were right for Sarlat. I told them yes."

The fellow nodded with a relieved air and drew him a can of wine. He drank it off, and a few minutes later we were in our saddles, and riding speedily in the direction of the château.

By this time it was rapidly becoming dark, and it behoved us to hurry if we were to arrive at our destination before the gates were closed for the night. I found my men awaiting me half a mile beyond the village. From the man who knew the district I learned that the château was not five minutes' ride farther on, and after a few minutes' thought I bade all dismount save three. My plan was to get to the château secretly, so that we should not alarm our man. Once there, and all exits guarded, the horses could be sent for.

Ten minutes' sharp walk brought us to the

wood which hid the château from view. Up the middle of this a roadway had been made; this we traversed silently, and soon the lights of the place became visible.

At the end of the avenue was a gateway, not guarded, opening into a great courtyard, the walls of which were twice the height of a man. These ran to right and left in a half-circle and abutted on either end of the main building. Leaving ten men under Jean l'Ange on watch at the gates with instructions to take any man who issued forth, I, with the others, passed round the walls to the back of the château. There were no exits save the windows, and those nearest the ground were barred. This filled me with satisfaction, for I saw that four men, patrolling up and down the length of the building, would be sufficient to prevent the Vicomte escaping that way. Picking out four men, therefore, I gave them instructions to keep a sharp look-out, and with the three remaining returned to those on guard at the gates.

There had been no alarm of any kind, and, after a muttered conversation with Jean, I sent one man for the horses and bade four remain at the gate, and not let anyone, man or woman, pass out unless they gave the word "Cahors." With the rest, eight in number, I passed through the gates, and with a feeling of triumph in my breast made quickly for the lighted entrance. Twenty yards we made without any cause for alarm; then, as we drew nearer, two men, each carrying a lighted lanthorn, issued forth and, laughing and chattering, sauntered towards us. We had arrived, it appeared, just in time, for these men, I guessed, were about to perform their nightly task—the bolting and locking of the gates.

They came on slowly, swinging their lanthorns carelessly. In a low voice I instructed my men to spread out and take them as noiselessly as possible. One of them began the lilt of a song, then, as one of my men made a slight stumble and his armour rattled, suddenly stopped and cried, "What's that?" and extended his lanthorn. His fellow did the same, and the light, glinting on our armour and weapons, betrayed us, and with loud cries of alarm they wheeled round and dashed back to the château. "After them!" I cried, and on the instant we gave chase, and came up with them as they gained the lighted entrance. They flung themselves on the door, and strove their utmost to close it, but in vain; they were but two against nine, and in a second we were within and they were prisoners.

In an instant the place was in an uproar; women shrieked at the sight of my grim-looking men, and the men volleyed out curses. In the midst of it all came the voice of a woman, sweet and clear, and at once the noise subsided, and, turning, I beheld, coming down the stairs, the fairest woman, on my faith, I have ever seen. Tall and stately of figure, proud and beautiful of face, she was the peer of any woman I had ever set eyes on.

She came down quickly, and as she drew near I uncovered and bowed. She came to a stop within a few paces of me. The light was full on my face. Her eyes opened wide and her hands flew to her throat as she stared at me in mute bewilderment, and then at the men about me. At last: "Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!" she murmured, and, half turning, looked up the stairs.

I followed her gaze, but saw nothing, though I knew without telling that the Vicomte was somewhere above, and I gave a soft laugh.

"A wonderful likeness, madame, is it not?" I could not restrain saying.

Several of my men sniggered, but I silenced them with a gesture, and turned to the woman again. She was eyeing me keenly.

"Who, monsieur, are you?" she asked, gently, "and what is your business here?"

"I am Captain Moreau, from the barracks at Cahors," I answered; "and my business—to my regret, believe me, madame—is to arrest M. de Salviac."

Her face did not change in the least, not a quiver swept her features, only a stony look came into her eyes. She did not speak, but stared at me mutely. I shivered as her gaze met mine, and a feeling, not of fear, but of something near akin to fear, filled my body, and my cheeks paled. To hide it I spoke.

"You will be good enough, madame," I said, "to send a servant for your husband; I think he is above."

She gave me a chilly smile. "And what, M. le Capitaine," she answered, coldly, "if I will not?"

I felt myself blush, and it was well for her she was a woman. "Then, madame," I said, harshly, "if you will not I must send my men for him, and, believe me, they will not be gentle."

"Then," she said, with a little laugh, "you must do so, for no servant of mine shall go," and she turned nonchalantly away.

I stared at her in bewilderment, hardly crediting my own hearing, and a feeling of doubt came upon me. She seemed so calm,

so careless, that I began to doubt if the Vicomte was in the house, began to think he had already made his escape. In these old châteaux there were, I knew, many secret passages and chambers — possibly he had passed through one of them. Or—and it was more than likely—this seeming indifference might be a blind. But we should soon know. I stepped to her side.

"That is your last word, madame?" I said.

She bowed. "It is my last word," she answered.

"Then his blood be upon your head," I said; and, turning to Jean l'Ange, I bade him take five men and ransack the place from top to bottom.

He nodded grimly; I could see the task was to his liking. "We'll start at the bottom, M. le Capitaine," he said, "and work to the tiles."

"As you please," I answered, "but find him."

"We'll find him if he is to be found," he said, with a harsh laugh, and, accompanied by the five men, he passed out of the hall.

I turned to Madame de Salviac. "Believe me, madame," I said, coldly, "you are very foolish; it is impossible for him to escape. The gates are guarded, and the men have instructions not to let anyone pass out without a certain word, and there are men watching the windows at the back."

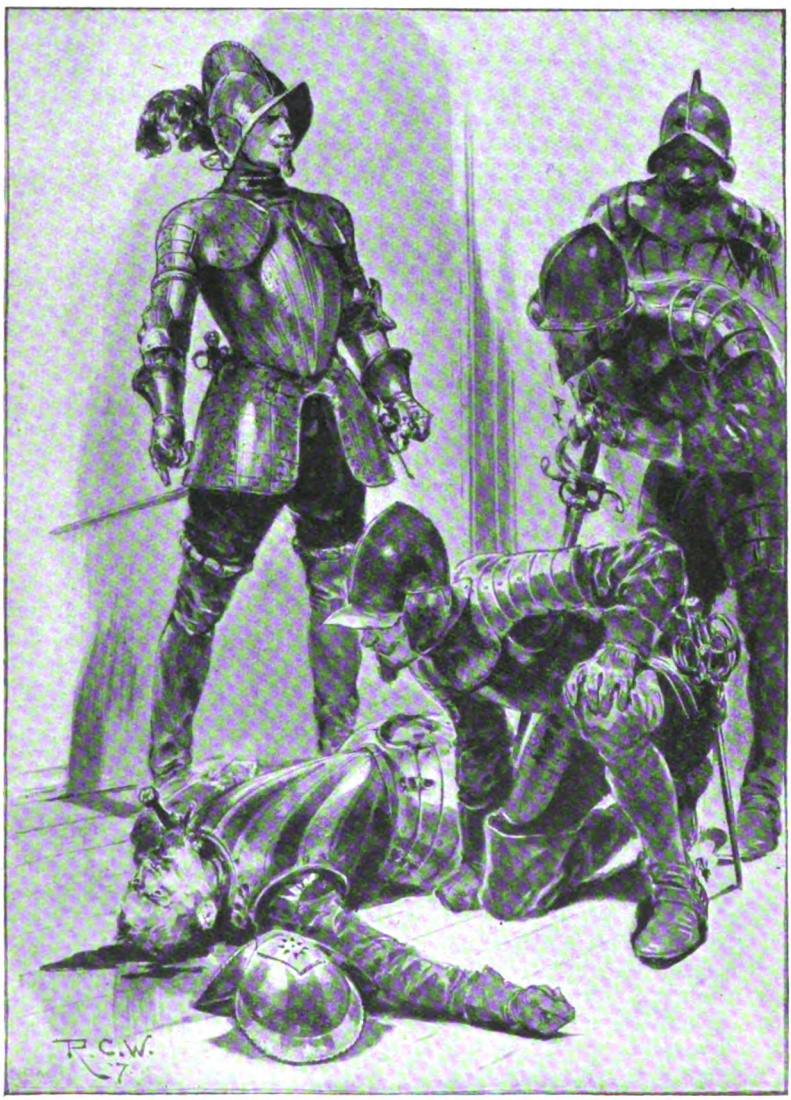
She stared at me for a moment. "And if your men do not find him?" she questioned.

I laughed. "We shall stay here until we do find him," I answered, grimly.

She turned pale at that. "Oh!" she murmured, and swayed a little. "I will go—go to my room, if you please." She went on in a low voice, "I feel—faint."

I sprang to her side and offered her my arm. "Permit me," I said, but she waved me aside. "Thank you," she murmured, "I will take one of my women," and, calling one to her, passed up the stairs.

I followed her with my eyes, and as the slender figure vanished from my view a



"'HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?' I CRIED."

feeling of distaste for my task came upon me, and I cursed to myself and wished, I confess it, I was back in my quarters at Cahors. But my duty was plain. The Vicomte was to be arrested, and I, a soldier, must not be turned from it by a woman.

When I heard the door of madame's room close above, I bade the two men left to me stand by the entrance door, then passed into a small room off the hall, and seated myself by the fire. Barely had I done so when one of the men who had accompanied Jean came to me.

"He is not below, M. le Capitaine," he said.

"Then you will search above," I ordered, "and, mind you, deal gently with Madame de Salviac." He bowed, and went out again.

I heard the men pass noisily up the stairs, heard the sound of doors opening and shutting above; then these sounds were drowned by the clattering of hoofs in the cobbled courtyard, and, going to the door, I found the horses had arrived and were being fastened to the rings in the walls. I was about to give orders for them to be taken to the stables when a loud cry of "M. le Capitaine!" checked me, and turning back into the hall I saw a man coming rapidly down the stairs.

He rushed breathless to my side. "What is it?" I cried. "Have you taken him?" and I grasped his arm.

He shook his head. "No," he gasped; "but Jean is dead; a dagger-thrust in his throat!"

I followed him up the stairs and into a room where the men who had accompanied Jean were bending over a body on the floor. It was that of Jean, with, as the man had said, a dagger-thrust in his throat.

I turned on them furiously. "How did this happen?" I cried.

They shook their heads. They could tell me nothing. All they knew was that Jean had left them when they were searching the room on the right, and on their entering this they had found him as he now lay—dead.

"And you saw nothing, heard nothing?"

"Nothing," they answered.

I was filled with rage as I gazed upon the body of the man who, ten minutes before, had been in the full strength and vigour of his manhood, and all feelings of pity left me. There should be a heavy reckoning, I told myself. I sat on the table for a few minutes in deep thought; then, "You have searched all the rooms?" I asked.

"All but two on the left," they replied.

"That of Madame de Salviac?"

They nodded. They had searched all thoroughly, but seen no signs of any man. Yet, if my surmise that it was the Vicomte who had killed Jean was correct, he could not be far. There must be some secret room. But where? A thought came suddenly into my mind, and I bade the men accompany me. We searched the two remaining rooms, but found nothing, then returned downstairs.

The two men we had taken on our entrance were standing in the hall when we reached the foot of the stairs, eyeing the men at the door in no friendly fashion, and talking in whispers. I bade them accompany us, and they followed, with white and anxious faces. I led the way into the room off the hall and seated myself on the table.

The two servants trembled visibly. I ordered them harshly to stand forward. "Your master, my men," I said, and fixed them with my eyes; "where is he?"

Both shook their heads. "I do not know," said one, and "Nor I, M. le Capitaine," answered the other.

I laughed grimly, and turned to one of my men. "Fetch a riding-whip," I said, and at my words they cowered. "I swear I do not know," cried one, a young man with a weak face; the other, an older man, having the appearance of an old soldier, kept silence.

"And you, my friend?" I said to him.

He shook his head and said nothing.

"You have nothing to say?" I asked.

"Nothing," he answered.

The man entered with the riding-whip at that moment. "We shall soon see," I said, grimly, and bade my men take off his coat and bind his hands. He submitted, knowing it would be useless to struggle.

"A last time," I said, "will you tell me where he is?"

He shook his head doggedly, and I stared at him thoughtfully for some seconds. I did not like what I was about to do; I had not intended it. I had thought to frighten the information out of them—but it seemed the only way. Besides, Jean lay dead upstairs. I hardened my heart at that thought, and bade my men lay on—the Vicomte must be found.

The man who took the whip—a big, brawny man with immense shoulders—seemed to take pleasure in his task. He waved the others aside, then struck with all his strength. Soon the fellow's shirt was in ribbons and stained with blood. He bore it in silence for some time; but soon, as the

lash bit into his raw flesh, he shrieked aloud in his agony and his eyes protruded from their sockets.

The sight sickened me, who had seen war at its worst, and I stopped my man with a gesture and ordered the fellow some wine. When this was done, and he had recovered somewhat: "Now, my man," I said, "will you tell me?"

He glared at me with his bloodshot eyes. "No, curse you!" he cried; "do what you will, I will not!"

The fool brought it upon himself, and I bade the man lay on again. The lash had fallen thrice, and the fellow's cries were filling the place, when I heard the sound of rushing footsteps, and in an instant the door was flung open and a man whom hitherto I had not seen sprang into the room and dashed aside my men. I beckoned him to approach. "Well?" I said.

He gave me an evil scowl. "My mistress," he said, "would like to see you; will you come, please, at once?"

I nodded, and bade my men release the servant and remain where they were until I returned. Then I followed the fellow upstairs. We came to madame's room. My guide knocked, opened it, and motioned me to enter. I did so. Madame was sitting on a chair by the window, her face buried in her hands, and appeared to be sobbing convulsively. I crossed to her, and was about to speak, when I heard the door bolted behind me, and turning quickly, with a feeling of dread at my heart, I found myself looking into the barrel of a pistol, held in the hand of—I saw at a glance—M. de Salviac. By his side was the servant who had brought the message, crouching as if ready to spring on me.

I was too dumbfounded to make a movement; I could do nothing but stare at the Vicomte, and, my faith! how like we were! It was as though I was looking into a mirror. His face was white, and his eyes were blazing like live coals. "You cur!" he hissed.

That brought me to myself, and I made a quick movement to my sword-hilt, but he gave me so menacing a glance that I thought it best to desist.

"I MADE A QUICK MOVEMENT TO MY SWORD-HILT."

He gave a slight laugh. "You are wise, M. le Capitaine," he said, very softly, but the tone of his voice was such as to send a shiver through me; then, turning to the servant, "Relieve him of his weapons," he commanded, and the fellow, stepping forward, did so, and none too gently.

"Now, M. le Capitaine," the Vicomte went on, "we can talk; pray seat yourself," and he motioned me to a chair.

"I will stand, if you please," I said, stiffly, "and, believe me, M. le Vicomte, this will not avail you."

He laughed again. "Of that we shall know better shortly," he said, and looked thoughtfully at his wife, who had risen and stood watching, no traces of weeping now on her face. After a while he turned to me with puckered brows. "I suppose, M. le Capitaine," he said, "you are a man with a price; what——"

"By heavens, monsieur!" I broke in, for I saw what was coming, "have a care. I am no man to be bought; have a care, I say."

He stared at me in perplexity. "Softly, my good man," he said, sternly; but I laughed.

"Softly or not softly, it is all one," I said; "you cannot escape, as doubtless madame has told you."

He frowned. "Madame has told me," he said, and made a step towards me, "and I want that password," he hissed, fiercely.

"Then, monsieur," I answered, coldly, "you want what you shall not have," and turned carelessly aside.

He caught me by the shoulder. "By heavens!" he cried, "but I will have it!" and he lifted his dagger above my head, his eyes glittering ominously. "Now, monsieur, the word, or——"

Thus far had he got when his wife broke in with a sudden cry of "Charles!" and he wheeled round. "What is it?" he said, testily.

"I have it," she cried, and drawing his head down to her lips spoke for some minutes in a low, earnest voice.

I began to tremble, for I felt that the woman was more to be feared than the man. I glanced furtively at the door, but the servant stood before it with a naked sword in his hand, and he grinned when his eyes met mine. I turned again to the others. The man was staring at me with wide-open eyes. "Par Dieu!" he muttered, and turned again to his wife. "You think it can be done?" he said, and she nodded. "I do," she answered. "They are only clods."

He nodded, then motioned to a door which

"I BEGAN TO TREMBLE, FOR I FELT THAT THE WOMAN WAS MORE TO BE FEARED THAN THE MAN."

apparently led into another room. She gave me a curious smile and passed through; then, taking up the dagger, the Vicomte turned to me. "You will be good enough to undress, monsieur," he said, with a grim smile.

"Undress!" I exclaimed, and with the word knowledge came as to what he was about to do.

"Yes, and quickly," he answered, as he fingered the dagger.

"And if I will not?" I said.

His eyes glittered, and he lifted his dagger, then he laughed. "Oh, but you will," he said.

I was fairly trapped, and I could see no way out of it; there was nothing for me but to obey. An attempt at escape might end in death, and in that case matters would only be made easier for him; he would but have to dress himself in my clothes, proclaim the dead body as that of the Vicomte, and who the wiser? And I had no wish to die. Besides, something might turn up that would enable me to turn the tables. I undressed, therefore, and he did the same, and each arrayed himself in the other's clothes.

In a mirror on the wall I caught sight of my reflection. The clothes, of a violet colour, suited me to perfection, and in every detail of outward appearance I was the Vicomte. I turned to him and my heart sank. He too was looking at his reflection and smiling with satisfaction. And with reason. No one—not even my intimates—would have thought him to be other than myself.

He turned, and his eyes met mine, and in them he must have seen something of my fear, for he laughed sardonically. "I congratulate you, M. le Vicomte," he said, and made me a deep bow.

I trembled with rage, but, mastering it, I asked, coolly enough: "And what is your next step, monsieur?"

He laughed. "Fasten you up head and foot, my friend, gag you, put you in there"—and he motioned to a cupboard—"then to alter the password. Think you not it is a good plan?" and his eyes glinted with amusement.

For a second only, however, for the words had scarcely left his lips when there came the sound of footsteps mounting the stairs, then along the corridor. They stopped without the door of the room we were in; there came a knock, then a voice—that of one of my men—calling softly, "M. le Capitaine!"

I glanced at the Vicomte His face was set, his eyes shone viciously, and in his hand he grasped the dagger tightly. I gave a little laugh. "It is a plan that fails, M. le Vicomte," I said, and aloud I cried: "Help! help! The Vicomte is here!" and sprang towards the door.

The fellow without echoed my words. I heard a commotion down below, heard my men coming rapidly up the stairs, heard their curses as they flung themselves on the door. The next instant the Vicomte and his servant were on me, the former's hands gripping my throat.

Mon Dieu! how I struggled! But, struggle as I would, I could not release myself from those fingers, strengthened with the fear of capture, of steel. I caught him one blow with my clenched hand in the face. He staggered, but his grip tightened, squeezing the life out of me. The lights turned red, my head throbbed as if it would burst; then, as the door fell in with a crash — I heard it as if in a dream — consciousness left me."

How long I lay unconscious I know not. When I came to myself I found I was lying on a couch, two men standing over me. For the moment I could recollect nothing then, as my brain began to work, knowledge came, and I tried to rise. But in vain. I was bound hand and foot, and worse, gagged, so that I could not utter a word. I felt that I was utterly lost.

Lifting my head, I took in what was passing. Madame de Salviac was sitting on a chair by the window, her face buried in her hands, and her body was shaken by sobs. It was well acted. The Vicomte was standing a few paces away, a kerchief held to his mouth, stained with blood—the result of my blow, I guessed—his gaze bent on madame. He affected to give a sneer. "Hush, madame," he said, in a thick voice, "hush, madame, if you please; tears will not help him."

She lifted her head and gave him one pathetic look, then her eyes sought mine. He followed her gaze, and, seeing that I was watching, laughed, then bent to the men about him and spoke for some minutes in a low voice.

When he had finished they nodded. "And you, M. le Capitaine?" one questioned.

"I? Oh, I shall stay here until morning. I still have some work to do," he answered, and glanced at his wife. "Now do you all go, save two," he continued; "they will be sufficient."

They nodded again, then four of their number crossed to me, and lifting me bore me through the doorway. It is impossible

for me to describe my feelings. Oh, the irony of it! I could have wept in my rage. To have arranged things so well, to have been at such pains for success, and now to be taken prisoner by my own men! I could have wept, I say, and the tears would not have shamed me.

The men bore me downstairs, through the hall, and into the courtyard. Here the horses were waiting, with some of the men already mounted. My ankles were untied, then I was mounted, and my legs tied under the horse. A minute more and we were trotting through the avenue of trees, and in scarce more time than it takes to write were on the high road to the hamlet.

What was there for me to do? As far as I could see, nothing but to submit, and to do other than that I had no option. If I could but get the gag out all would yet be well. I strove my utmost to do so, strove my utmost to release my hands, but in vain. At length I gave it up as hopeless, and with a heart full of misery took in my surroundings.

As I have said, we were on the high road to Salviac, the hamlet, in fact, being but half a mile farther on. Whither they were taking me I did not know—I had not caught the Vicomte's instructions—but I did not for a moment think Cahors was our destination, the hour being so late and the distance so great. Salviac was much more likely, and my surmise was correct.

The village was in darkness as we rode through the cobble-paved street; not a single glimmer of light was to be seen, and this, considering the hour, was not surprising. We rode slowly on until we arrived at the tavern where a few hours before I had got my information, and here the man who had constituted himself leader drew rein, the others following his example.

They dismounted, and two of their number hammered on the door with the butt-ends of their pistols. "Within there!" they cried.

A minute more and an upper window was opened, and the face of the innkeeper appeared. "What is it?" he cried.

"We want admittance instantly," the leader answered.

"Admittance at this hour?" the fellow echoed.

"Yes, at this hour, fool," the leader cried; "and quickly if you don't want your door broken in."

The innkeeper muttered an oath, but his face disappeared from the window, and shortly the door was opened wide and he stepped out, only half-dressed. "What is it?" he asked again.

"That is our business," our leader answered; "sufficient be it for you we want shelter for the night." He turned to the man behind him. "Bring him in," he commanded, and a second later I was being led into the now lighted tavern.

The leader turned to the landlord. "I want a room where the door can be locked," he said, "and where there is no other exit."

"For what?" the innkeeper inquired.

The man motioned to me. "To keep our prisoner for the night," he answered.

The innkeeper turned and his eyes met mine. He stared for a moment, then stepped forward and looked into my face. His face paled. "Mon Dieu!" he muttered, "mon Dieu!"

At his words my heart gave a jump, and the blood surged through my veins. To him, dressed as I was, and in this position, I was the Vicomte; he could not think otherwise. What if—— But I scarcely dared to hope. I gave him a meaning look, and he nodded almost imperceptibly.

He appeared to stand in thought for some moments, then turned to the leader of my men. "I have such a room," he said. "Will you look at it?"

The man nodded, and the innkeeper led him to a door opening out of the room we were in. This he opened, and the two passed in with a lighted lanthorn, to reappear in a moment. The leader nodded. "That room will do," he said, and binding my feet again they carried me in, closed the door, bolted it on the outside, and I was alone in the darkness.

Alone, and beginning to hope. I was certain that the innkeeper thought me to be the Vicomte. If it was so, he would consider it his duty, whatever the cost, to set me free. I began to feel more myself. Even yet I might be able to turn the tables on the Vicomte, and, if so, M. le Vicomte de Salviac would regret this night's work more than any other in his life.

Impatiently I waited. In the next room I heard the rattle of wine-cans and the ribald laughter of the men as they listened to one of their number singing low songs, but gradually these sounds died away, until, I imagined, sleep held sway.

When, after having been in the place what seemed to be hours, it came at last—a slight "click" on the side of the room farthest away from the door—I turned my head quickly. In an opening in the wall stood the

"I RAN HIM THROUGH THE SHOULDER."

innkeeper, a lanthorn in his hand, his head held on one side in a listening attitude. A moment more and he was kneeling by my side, cutting my bonds, and I was free.

Without speaking a word he moved to the opening—a sliding panel I found it to be—and passed through. As silently I followed, and found myself in a corridor that appeared to run the whole length of the back of the tavern. Now came my difficulty. What was I to do? Was I to arouse my men and tell them how they had been fooled, and by so doing show how great a fool I myself had been made? I did not like the idea. But

if not, what then? It was decided for me by the innkeeper.

"They are all asleep, my lord," he whispered, "and I have a horse waiting," at the same time handing me a sword and dagger.

I nodded; then, like a flash, it came to me that there were two of my men up at the château. They must be sufficient. "Lead the way, then," I said, in a low voice, and, treading lightly, he led the way to the back, where I found a horse already saddled. In a moment I was mounted, and, riding round the backs of the hovels, soon came out on the high road.

Five minutes' sharp ride brought me to the wood which hid the château. Here I drew rein, dismounted, and fastened my horse by the bridle to a tree. Quickly, then, and silently, I walked up the avenue of trees, and in a few minutes I was passing through the gateway.

The entrance was still lighted, and standing without were half-a-dozen horses with a man at their heads. The Vicomte had not gone, then. First to get rid of the man with the horses. Stealthily I crept along the wall until I was within a few paces of him; then, with a lightning spring, I had him by the throat, and he had spoken his last. The next instant I was in the entrance hall; it was deserted, and below there were no sounds of life. Up above I heard the sound of footsteps passing to and fro; but whose? The Vicomte's, I supposed. But where were my men? Without them I could do nothing. A sound, as of a slight movement, came to me from a room off the hall. I turned quickly thither and entered, and could have cried out with joy. My two men were there, gagged and bound, it is true, but still there. In a few minutes I had them on their feet.

They stared at me in astonishment. I gave a little laugh. "The man above is the Vicomte, my friends," I said; "where are the others?"

"Gone," they answered. The Vicomte, with madame and two men-servants, was above. The others had been gone an hour.

We were equal, three men to three. What I had been unable to do with a score I might now succeed in doing with three. Quietly we passed up the stairs, and gained the landing with scarcely a sound. From Madame de Salviac's room came the sound of voices. I led my men thither, and peering through the half-open door saw what was passing.

Madame was seated on a chair, dressed for riding. The Vicomte was seated at a table, sorting some papers, and the two men were standing just behind him. I drew my sword, and, after a word to my men to look to the two servants, flung open the door and entered.

The Vicomte sprang up with an oath and flashed out his weapon. Madame gave a shrill scream of fright, and the two servants sprang to their master's side. I stepped forward.

"In the King's name, M. le Vicomte de Salviac!" I said, and my voice thrilled with triumph. He cursed again, then sprang forward, and our weapons crossed. At the same time my two men engaged the servants.

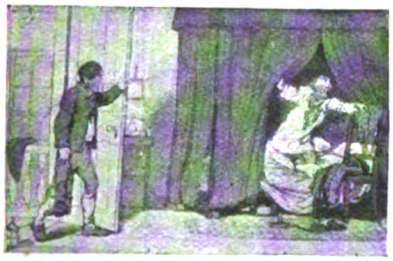
The room rang and rang again with the clash of steel on steel. The Vicomte was a good swordsman, but his best was not so good as mine, and in a few seconds it was over. Gradually his defence grew weaker, and suddenly I thrust strongly over his guard and ran him through the shoulder. His sword dropped with a clatter, he staggered to and fro, then measured his length on the floor. Madame had been watching us with wide-open, affrighted eyes, her hands to her throat; now with a scream she flew to his side, and, kneeling, took his head on her lap.

"Madame," I said, "be assured; he is not dead, not even badly wounded; in two days he will be about," and I turned to the others. But there was no need for my help. On seeing their master fall the two servants had flung away their swords and called for quarter, and now stood on one side with averted heads.

But little more needs telling. Of the journey to Cahors in the morning I will not write. Sufficient be it to say that we rode in through the northern gate at high noon, the Vicomte and madame—for she would not leave him—in our midst. The papers giving the desired information were among those the Vicomte had been sorting, so in the end fortune had smiled on me. Of my reward I will say nothing; suffice it to say that both reward and advancement I got. Yet how near had I gone to losing both; too near to be pleasant. But I remember this: "Who laughs last laughs best." And I am content.

OUR "100-PICTURE" GALLERY.

No. X.—A CENTURY OF JOKES.



"You villain! I told you to call me at eight o'clock. It is now only six." "Sure, I only called to tell your honour as your honour has two more hours to sleep."—1808.

IT may not actually be possible to write history from the jests of a nation, but it is certainly possible to derive a fairly clear idea of its past manners, customs, and amusements, its prejudices and its prepossessions. Turn over a collection of old comic prints; consult the pages of *Punch*, the *Man in the Moon*, Cruikshank's sketch-books, "Phiz's" satires, the skits of Atkinson, Seymour, Alken, and the rest, and you will easily see that each year of the century has its own peculiar joke, shedding little whimsical sidelights on society, and from which the historian may glean something more profitable than a smile.

In the first of the present collection, which is a coloured sketch by Atkinson of just a century ago, we find a jest which speaks eloquently of the vitality of an old friend who wears many disguises. It is first cousin to the Irish nurse who woke the patient to administer his sleeping-draught.

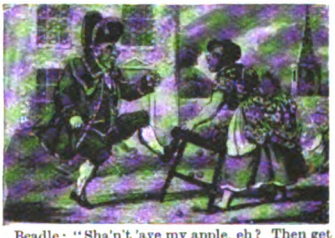
"Hullo! you've forgotten your oars."—1811.

Turnpike Man: "You should have gone home the way you came out. That ticket won't do here." Cockney: "I doesn't think I've got any halfpence." "Well, then, I must give you change." "But I'm afeard I haven't any silver left. I say, mister, couldn't you trust me?"—1815.

Amusements of the Poor.—"Knock down one, have 'em all."—1812.

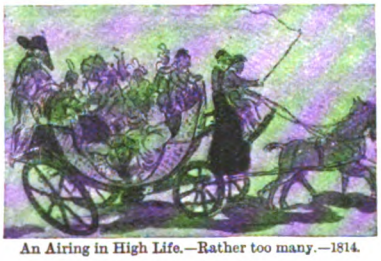
"Faith, sir, when I saw you at the end of the street I thought you were yourself; when you came nearer I thought you were your brother; but now I see it's neither of you."—1809.

Losing the substance and catching the shadow.—1813.



Beadle: "Sha'n't 'ave my apple, eh? Then get out o' this, woman. We won't 'ave no apples obstructing o' the streets; we'd rather 'ave plums." Applewoman: "Yes; an' you've got one growin' on the end of your nose."—1816.

Introspection.—1810.



An Airing in High Life.—Rather too many.—1814.

A Black Paradise.—"When Massa Wilberforce set me free I just look on and see de white folks work de treadmill and behave myself like a reel lady."—1817.

"Lawks-a-mercy! I'm going wrong, and got to walk all that way back again."—1818.

Economy.—1822.

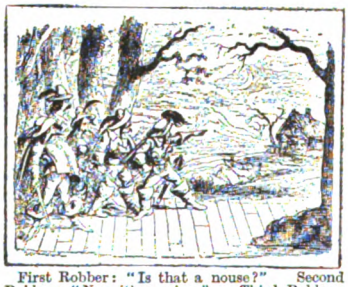
The Fire-Brand, or Mosquitoes in danger.—1823.

The cat did it.—1826.

"I say, Old Stock Fish, are there any gulls about here?" "Oh, yes, sir; there's always plenty on 'em about this time o' year."—1819.

Obtaining the countenance of the minister.—1824.

A Good Pennyworth.—"You shave-a for a penny?" "Ye-e-e-e-e-es, sir." "Very well, den; you shave-a me!"—1827.



First Robber: "Is that a nouse?" Second Robber: "No; it's a ninn." Third Robber: "No; it's a nut."—1820.

"Have you read the leader in this paper, Mr. Briskit?" "No, I never touch a newspaper; they are all so werry wenal and void of sentiment."—1825.

Monstrosities of 1821.

Another picture presumably gives us a glimpse of the West-end, when breeches had scarcely been abandoned as an article of wearing apparel. By the picture for 1814 we are reminded of Sydney Smith's plea for a more humane treatment of horses. "Do not, I pray, crowd more than eight persons in a carriage drawn by a single horse, whose locomotive power consists of only four legs. This will give two persons for every leg, which, when we consider the length and breadth of the limb, seems as much as equine nature can endure."

The picture for 1815 is one of the earliest skits on the travelling Cockney, who is here represented as trying vainly to cozen a typical turnpike-keeper of the period.

In the picture for 1817 we are brought back to the era of the impending emancipation of the slaves. In 1818 new guide-posts were set up in many parts of the kingdom, and loud were the complaints of the carelessness of the workmen.

That there is no vein of pictorial humour which has not been worked at some period or other of the past is shown in the cat drawing of the famous Cruikshank (1826), which might

Fatal effects of tight lacing and large bonnets.—1828.

August—Bathing at Brighton.—1829.

"Twere well if we had never met."—1830.

The Heroes of the Revolution.—Little Boy: "In the name of the Republic hand over your spoons." Respectable Citizen: "But ——" Little Boy: "Buts are no go. Ledru-Rollin says our powers are unlimited."—1831.

Mistress of the House: "Oh, you little wretch, where have you been to?" Small Patriot (in a deep voice): "Dethroning tyrants—changing the dynasty of France and the destiny of Europe."—1832.

Quarter-Master General.—1833.

Nocturnal delights of a Gothic cottage.—"Wh-oo-oo-oo's there?"—1834.

Comforting Assurance.—"Oh, it's only his play, mum; he wouldn't hurt a hair of nobody's head."—1835.

"Please, sir, here's the boots you ordered before you went to sea, and father wants the money!"—1836.

A pair of bellows.—1837.

easily be a superior product of the school of cat drawing of to-day.

In 1823 we have the humour of the dying three-bottle set in the portly gentleman whose nose is so fiery red that the tropical mosquitoes attacking it fall singed as moths before a flame. Every year brings some new theme for jest or satire—some new trait, some new custom, dress, or institution. One season brings the gigantic military busby, another year it is the new fashion of cheap plaster-casts sold in the streets, or again, what is strange to us now, the brand-new Cockney fashion of dropping h's, which was not grown general even in Sam Weller's day. The Revolutionary outbreaks of 1830 were responsible for many skits, as was also the new craze of Gothic villas in the suburbs, which the writers and artists of the thirties poked much fun at, because in those days the Metropolitan suburbs, so populous to-day, were then just beginning to exist for the City clerk and the man of moderate means. In the joke for 1836 we see, indeed, the irony of fate most humorously exemplified. "Cavendish toe-lined" is an elaborate Cruikshank pun on the tobacco so called which made its appearance that year.

There is to us an additional touch of

A Barracks Favourite.—Cavendish "toe lined."—1838.

"I say, Jim, vot made you give up your independen e and go into the vorkhouse?" "Vy, my old gal had sich a blessed long tongue that ven this new Poor Law Hact comes seperating man and wife, says I, that's the werry thing ve poor people vant; ve never before couldn't get a divorse."—1842.

comedy lent to the sketch of the dashing Lifeguardsman who is surveying the small boy in his river-side ablutions (1843). However much this species of military hero may have appealed to the Park nursemaids in the early forties, we fear he would be regarded to-day as something of a "guy." Echoes of the great railway mania are found in the fanciful portrait of George Hudson, the Railway King (1846)—a portrait, as will be seen, entirely constructed of locomotives, funnels, tunnels, and smoke. In looking at the very funny picture for 1847 we may recall that this was the height of the great period of emigration, when emigrants' tales of adventurous roughing it in the wilds of Canada, Australia, and Western America were in everyone's mouth. A banquet nearer home and *al fresco*

"Ha! ha! ha! Excuse me, sir, but it's so wonderful! You have blown the wild bunnies out of their own brown skins into the black-and-white jackets of tame rabbits."—1839.

The Bathing Season.—Little Boy (to tall Lifeguardsman): "Come in, sojer." What are you afeard on? It ain't out of your depth."—1843.

Fancy Portrait: The Railway King.—1846.

A local rebellion subdued.—1840.

"Mother says I shall never set the Thames on fire, but I am blessed if I don't try."—1844.

The emigrants' Christmas dinner—Effects of the smell of roast beef.—1847.

is occasionally threatened by quadrupeds, as seen in a picture for the same decade (1845), where the intruding bovine, putting his best hoof forwards, irreparably demolishes Aunt Jemima's most luscious tart, as well as other comestibles intended for the picnic.

We soon come with 1848 again into an atmosphere of revolution, and scattered up and down the periodicals of that day one will come across many jokes at the expense of the

Unscientific Lady: "Bless me, the gardener has forgotten to wind up the sundial."—1841.

Oh!—"Oh, Lawkes, there's that nasty cow walking all over our dinner. Oh, dear! there goes his foot into the currant and raspberry pie."—1845.

'You ought to have come to the Pig and Whistle last nicht, Jim, you ought. There vos two furren princes there, and a German Prime-Minister in trouble, as made themselves very agreeable."—1848.

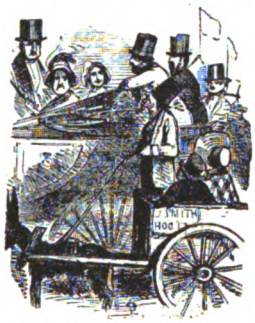
"Madam! You have just dropped your shawl. Allow me the honour of presenting it to you.'—1852.

revolutionaries. We are now, too, we must remember, in the decade when both Dickens and Thackeray were at their highest vogue, so that the very appearance of the characters portrayed inevitably suggests the Gamps, the

Miss Martha Twinch's adventure in the wild-beast show.—1856

Anxious Mother: 'Come, now, Rosalinda—it's no use. I know there's something on your mind. Has any body been a trifling with your affections?"—1849

"Oh! Sally. I told my missus vot you said your missus said about her." "Ah, and so did I, Betty. I told my missus vot you said yourn said of her, and ve had sich a row."—1853



"I say, old 'un, where did yer put up yer 'osses? We want to know of a goodish place."—1857.

Mantalinis, and the Old Campaigners of those writers. The advent of crinoline was, as might be expected, greeted by a thousand jests, which, however, had no power to impede its triumphal progress, although occasionally the triumphant progress of the individual fair wearer thereof was pretty effectually impeded. The mid-Victorian era was the halcyon days of picnics. Never before or since has the picnic achieved such popularity, consequently we can understand the success of the experiment delineated by the artist (1854).

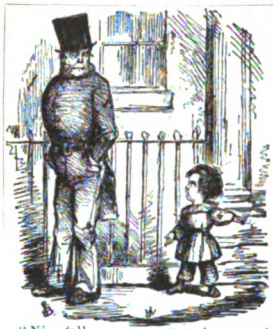
The Problem.—How is she going to get through?—1850.

A picnic in the drawing-room—a capital thing for a wet day.—1854.

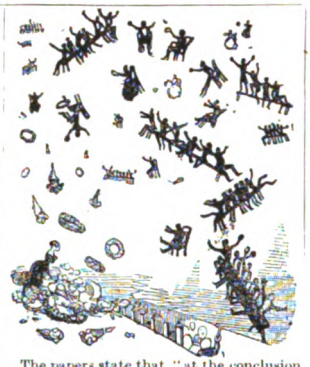
"Ah, no one would ever know that the head had been broken off. I defy missus to find it out."—1851.

Higgledy Piggledy, or a Domestic Republic.—1855.

If the reader wants to make the acquaintance of the policeman of the fifties—one of the real old-fashioned "peelers"—he may encounter him at the top of the next page, where he is being



"Nice fellows you are to take care of people's property. Here's a cove been and chucked my hat over the railings, and you standing there as if nothing had happened."—1858.



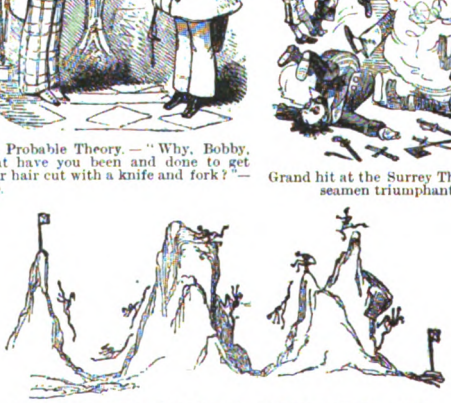
The papers state that "at the conclusion of 'La Sonnambula' the pit rose, and Mlle. Lind was literally covered with the bouquets." Our artist has depicted above the rising of the pit and the storm of flowers with singular accuracy.—1862.

The Surprise.—"Dear me, Frank, who would have thought of you showing up in crinoline!"—1859.

Joan of Arc—as she would have appeared at the age of forty-five.—1863.

A Probable Theory.—"Why, Bobby, what have you been and done to get your hair cut with a knife and fork?"—1860.

Grand hit at the Surrey Theatre—British seamen triumphant.—1864.



Horse-racing North of the Tweed—A Highland Derby.—1861.

lectured by a member of the Young England party on his official duties. Apropos of costume, we must not omit to note the somewhat extravagant attire current in the following year in the upper circles. The humorous skit on the reception of the great singer, Jenny Lind (1862), might equally have been inspired this year by Adelina Patti, at whom the pit rose with immense enthusiasm. It was about this time that there was talk of a Highland Derby—a great national horse-race north of the Tweed. This was enough for the London wits, who promptly proceeded, greatly to the chagrin of Leith and Glasgow, to delineate the sort of race in prospect (1861).

It was not long after the date of the picture wherein we are shown the couple of chimney-sweeps that, owing to the efforts of a band of humane reformers, children were debarred from this employment. In

Pot companions.—1865.

Varsity Life.—Fond and rich uncle: "I'll just take a peep at my nevvy at his studies."—1866

"I am sure, mamma, I don't see why you should object to my keeping the bouquet Arthur has sent me. I was fifteen yesterday, and I know his intentions are honourable."—1867.

one of the newspapers of the sixties, when the rise of Disraeli to power encouraged the introduction of many other Jews into Parliament, someone asked why the rotunda of the Victoria Tower at Westminster had been made so high. The answer which was supplied by a contemporary humorist almost seems to require explanation to-day. In those times the sign of a Hebrew was invariably the wearing of three or four hats one above the other. It may be that only one Semite in a thou-

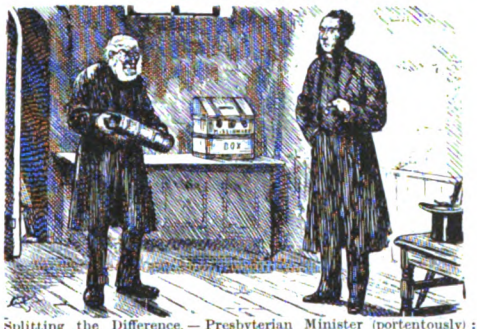
A Scene in St. James's Park.—Old Lady: "Deary me, a poor foreigner introduced in 1797, and they have not given him Christian burial after all."—1868.

Very Likely.—"Run away, my little angels; if you go on you will end by annoying the gentleman."—1871.

The Fortune-Hunter.—"My Adored One,—Though surrounded with splendour in the halls of my father, nothing gives me enjoyment. Fly with me, therefore, that I may not cease to exist. Wait not for your dividends being due; borrow of your good aunt, I will repay you tenfold when my noble father is reconciled to my rashness.—Your own Adolphe."—1875.

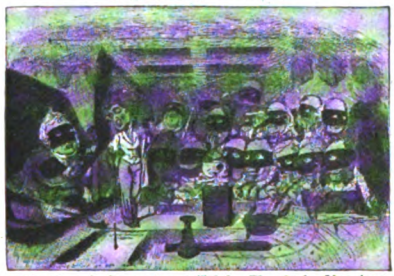
The Jews in Parliament.—The enormous height of the archway to the Victoria Tower has excited surprise. We have, however, ascertained that its altitude is designed to facilitate the entrance of Baron Rothschild, should he, upon State occasions, appear in the ancient head-dress of his race.—1869.

The Woes of the Actor.—"A pretty time to be filled with passion and to have to make love à la Turc, crying, 'O, my Zuelima, share my wealth and my throne. Let us plunge into opulence and joy,' with a ha'porth of fried potatoes in your inside!"—1872.



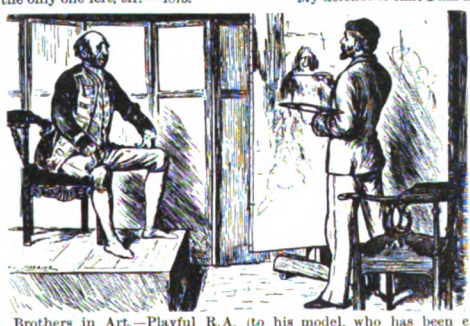
Splitting the Difference.—Presbyterian Minister (portentously): "James, this is a very dreadful thing! You have heard there is one pound missing from the box!" James (the Beadle, who is strongly suspected): "'Deed, sir, so they were tellin' me." Minister (solemnly): "James, you and I alone had access to that box——" James: "It's just as ye say, sir—it must lie between us twa! An' the best way'll be, you to pay the tae half an' I'll pay the tither, an' say na' mair aboot it!"—1876. *(Reproduced by permission of the Proprietors of "Punch.")*

Scene in a Cloak-Room.—Stout Gentleman: "*That* my coat!" Attendant: "It is the only one left, sir."—1873.



The Female Promoter on Trial.—The Lady Morgiana: "My defence is that I am a woman."—1877.

A Boy of Spirit.—Papa: "Another impertinent word, sir, and I'll box your ears." Spirited Boy: "Do; for you know a blow would drive me from your roof for ever, and that's what you're driving at!"—1870.



Brothers in Art.—Playful R.A. (to his model, who has been expatiating on the dignity of the working man): "I am pleased to perceive, Jakes, that you are content with your humble condition, and do not envy the lot of the superior classes." Jakes: "Henvy them! Why, bless yer, them as belongs to them classes as you alludes to ain't 'alf so much to be henvied as them as belongs to the class as *me* and *you* belongs to."—1874. *(Reproduced by permission of the Proprietors of "Punch.")*

sand may have been an "old clo' man," but it was a popular humour to regard a top-heavy superfluity of hats as a badge of all the tribe.

We have also some admirable examples of the work of the great French humorous

Fond Mother: "That's Uncle George, my husband's brother; the children always make him play 'cars' with them when he comes here. He enjoys it as much as they do."—1878.

"Begorra, Oi must be gettin' among friends. Oi've bin walkin' the intoire mornin' an' that's the fursht sign of civilizaytion Oi've met wid."—1883.

Lady Tourist: "Are the sheets well aired?" Irish Chamber maid: "Troth, and they are, ma'am; for the sayson is three months begun, and they've been well used since!"—1879.

(*Reproduced by permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."*)

Rev. Mr. Tillinghast: "Not quarrelling, I hope, children?" Tommy: "Oh, no. We're just having tableaux." Mr. Tillinghast: "What does this one represent?" Tommy: "Mamma asking papa for a cheque."—1884.

An Unexpected Cold Snap.—Belated Pedestrian (slightly out of his proper course): "Faith, Oi had no idea 'twud freeze so hard to-night or I'd put on me heavy overcoat."—1880.

Mrs. Pulsifer (to her husband, who is going to masquerade as Henry VIII.) "Let's see, was it Henry that killed Annie Bolynn, or was it Annie that killed him?" Mr. Pulsifer: "I ain't dead sure, but I think Annie done th' deed." Mrs. Pulsifer: "I don't blame her, Joseph, if he looked like that."—1881.

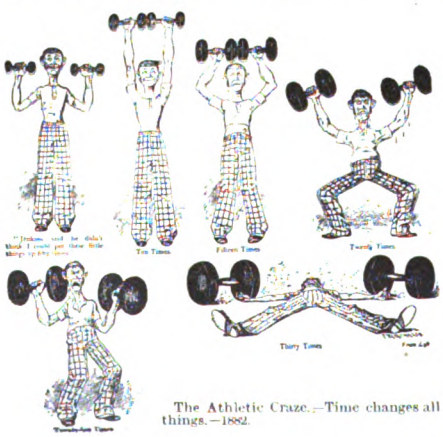
humour, a little broader, a little more farcical, than the contemporary English wit of Keene and Du Maurier.

One of the earliest American jokes might have been one of Keene's own, in the Irish gentleman who, after travelling all day, comes across the first genuine sign of civilization (1883).

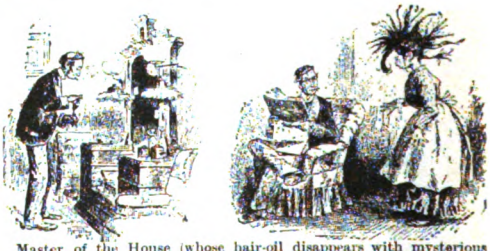
"I'll raise a beard; it'll make me look more manly.—1885.

With a beard.

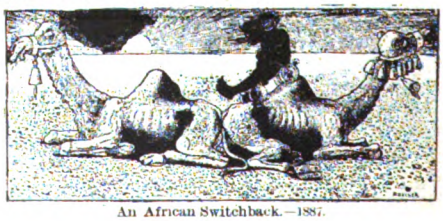
Yet there is room for all kinds of humour. It all reflects, too, the taste and spirit of the age. Perhaps we see the influence of the music-hall making its appearance, as, for example, in the picture of the Irishman's draughtsman Daumier, as well as Du Maurier and Keene. As the century wears along comes the discovery of a mine of American



The Athletic Craze.—Time changes all things.—1882.

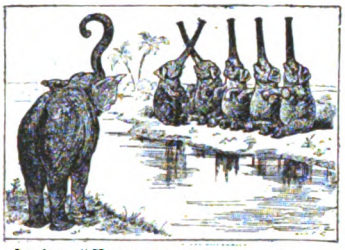


Master of the House (whose hair-oil disappears with mysterious rapidity, and who suspects Bridget): "I'll just fill the bottle up with this liquid glue and see how it works!" (Two hours later).—Bridget: "Please, sor, Oi'll be going out fer a docther to proshcribe fer me at wanst; the headach Oi have is that bad, it's pulling me hair out by the roots."—1886.



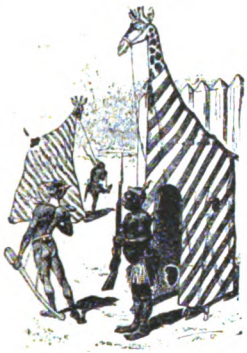
An African Switchback.—1887.

"Now if I hadn't been able to read, what a fix I might have been in."—1888.



Leader: "How many of the enemy have you counted?" Scouts: "Thirteen in all."—1892.

"Bedad, but that ould vessel's gone off wid a passenger what's left behind."—1894.



A movable watch-box.—1889.

Let barbers be required to wear diving-helmets; then they can see and hear, but they can't talk.—1893.

Cook: "Shure, mum, Zulu's just afther bitin' the lig off av the butcher bye." Mistress: "Dear, dear! How dreadfully annoying. I do hope he was a clean boy, Mary?"—1895.

expedient for a burglar alarum (1897). There is decided farce about this, as about many of the jokes of the eighties and nineties. It is not necessarily American; it may be French or German, as we may see in the case of the commercial traveller whose line is telegraph-

Your wife has retired with a sick headache, your little boy is suffering with the mumps, your baby is teething, your cook is taking her evening out, and you are not feeling very well yourself. Enter a crowd of jolly neighbours to give you a "surprise party."—1890.

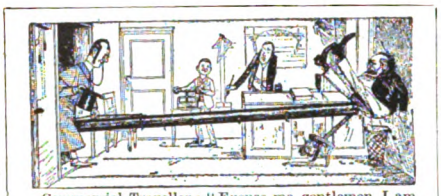
Semlein, Jun.: "De customer vas caught in de door, fadder!" Semlein, Sen.: "For kracious zakes, Aby, don't oben it pefore you cut off enough for a vest!"—1891.

The Circus Abrobat at Home.—Professional practice and domestic duties combined.—1896.

poles, and who brings with him a "sample" (1898).

"'Tis an illigant invintion of me own; when the burglars lifts the windy, down comes the rock."—1897.

When the history of the last decades of the last century comes to be written, how can the historian leave out the Hyde Park orator with his varied cults and creeds and the invariable collection? In the course of the century, too, the joke against the Scot has altered; it is less now his penury and greed than his consuming love of whisky, which, however, in the realm of humour, he



Commercial Traveller: "Excuse me, gentlemen, I am travelling in telegraph-poles, and this is a sample."—1898.

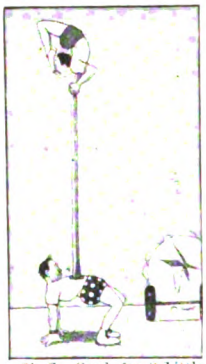
shares with Pochard in France and the Kentucky Colonel in America. Nor would the annals of modern manners be complete without the London female gamin as depicted by Phil May, whose joy at any personal event, from a Sunday-school "beano" to a case of small-pox, is so undisguised and genuine (1901).

Future antiquaries and philologists who are puzzled over the meaning of the phrase "Little Mary," with which a great little humorist enriched the Anglo-Saxon world, may find it very vividly illustrated in the selection for the year 1905. The same may be said for the famous phrase "strap-hanger," which assuredly deserves a place in any history of contemporary manners and customs.

Finally, if the reader will glance backward to the first page and decade of this century of jokes he will convince himself that Humour, fickle sprite though he be, has improved in quality during the lapse of the last hundred years, even after all due allowances have been made for the fact that our modern sense of humour is different from that of our forefathers. It is, at least, beyond dispute less coarse and more humane.

Sarcasm. — Park Orator (after sending the hat round to no purpose): "Well, I've got my 'at back!"—*The Sketch*, 1899.

District Visitor: "Why, Tommy, you don't say how d'ye do with the left hand, do you?" Tommy: "No, mum, I only shake wiv it."—*The Tatler*, 1902.



Oh So Good for "Little Mary." — "'Urry up, Bill, there's a bloomin' worsp buzzin' round my 'ead."—*The Tatler*, 1905.

The Alien Artiste's Delusion.—"Ach! Again dot abblause!"—*The Sketch*, 1900.

Staking his Claim.—First Footpad to Second Ditto: "'E's mine! I saw 'im first."—*The Tatler*, 1903.

The Expert Strap-hanger. — Voice from above: "Don't leave go, Jimmy, whatever you do." Jimmy: "That's all right, old man. I've got a season on the District."—*The Tatler*, 1906.

Old Gentleman: "Well, have you been a good girl and been to school?" Kid (jubilantly): "Na-a-w. I've got the small-pox!"—*The Tatler*, 1901.

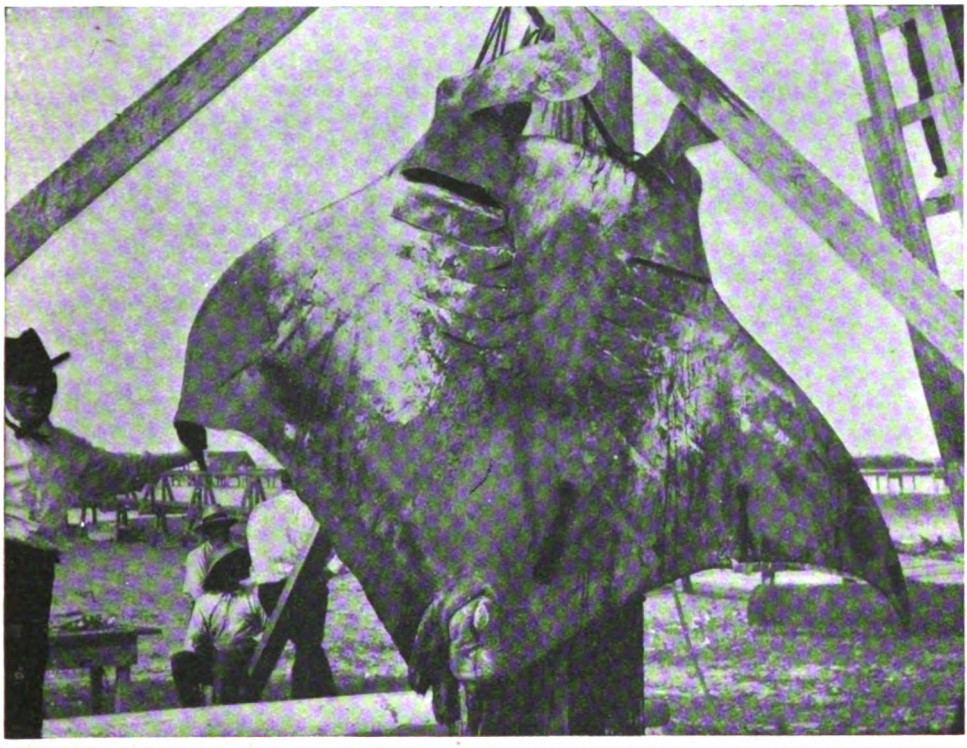
First Scot: "What kin' o' man is McPherson?" Second Scot: "A gey queer kin' o' man. I went to his hoose and he askit me to tak some whusky. When he began to poor it oot I said, 'Stop! stop!' and he stoppit! That's the kin' o' man he is.'—*The Tatler*, 1904.

Passenger (mistaking bandsman for the steward): "Mercy! Haven't you got anything bigger?" — *The Tatler*, 1907.

STORIES STRANGE AND TRUE.

II.—A Fight with a Sea-Devil.

TOLD BY J. W. MAXWELL AND SET DOWN BY W. D. HORNADAY.



THE MONSTER DEVIL-FISH WAS STRUNG UP AND PHOTOGRAPHED AFTER ITS CAPTURE — IT MEASURED FIFTEEN FEET ACROSS AND NINE FEET IN LENGTH, WHILE ITS WEIGHT WAS ESTIMATED AT THREE THOUSAND POUNDS.

IT was a perfect morning for tarpon fishing, and a number of sportsmen had gathered in the little town of Rockport, Texas, on the Gulf of Mexico, for the purpose of indulging in the pursuit of that "gamey" fish. There were a score and more of us. In the party were State officials and men prominent in business and public life in Texas and elsewhere.* The landing of a tarpon is of itself an experience that for sheer excitement caps anything in the ordinary line of deep-sea fishing, but none of us were prepared for the thrilling adventure which actually befell us that day.

We set off in a flotilla of boats, each containing two occupants—one a trained boatman and the other a member of our party.

The fishing-grounds are adjacent to Padre and St. Joseph Islands, in what is known as Aransas Pass, a deep channel that runs between these islands and connects the Gulf of Mexico with Aransas Bay. We were told when we arrived in this channel that a boatman had that morning seen five "sea-devils" disporting themselves near the end of the Government jetties, extending out from St. Joseph Island. Now we were landsmen,

* For purposes of reference it may be well to state that the party included Messrs. John W. Robbins, Treasurer of the State of Texas; Brigadier-General J. P. Cleary, of the United States Army; Eugene Cherry, E. P. Gregg, P. R. Markham, and O. C. Ahlers, all of Sherman, Texas; T. T. Fuller, of Wichita Falls; Walter Crow, of Waxahachie; Eugene Carley, of Terrell, Texas; Captain J. A. Waiters, of Houston; N. L. Buckner, Butz Metzler, Dr. E. V. Dickey, L. A. Pires, and C. C. Cobb, all of Dallas, Texas; Dr. G. H. Wooten, Roger Roberdeau, and J. W. Maxwell, of Austen. All of these gentlemen can corroborate the facts of this narrative — THE AUTHOR.

pure and simple, and entirely ignorant of what a sea-devil was or looked like; but the boatman, in answer to our questions, explained that it was a monster fish, better known among seafaring folk by the suggestive name of the "ocean vampire," and that it was a rare visitor to the Gulf Coast of Texas. He added that we must not confuse it with the sun-fish or sting-ray, or the octopus; the sea-devil was an entirely different species.

The news that a number of these deep-sea monsters were in that locality aroused our interest, and we kept a sharp look-out for them, just as a matter of curiosity.

With a view to having a little sport of a character somewhat different from tarpon fishing, Mr. Cherry of our party secured a harpoon from a visitor to Tarpon Inn, a fishermen's resort on Padre Island. This harpoon consisted of a bolt of steel six inches long and about an inch in diameter. At the end was a socket for a handle. Just below the socket was an eye, resembling, only on a much larger scale, that of a needle; to this was attached a hundred and fifty feet of rope. Set into the sides of the bolt were two prongs of steel, working on hinges. These lie flush with the bolt when the harpoon is thrown and penetrates the body of a fish; but when the weapon is pulled, the barbs, each an inch and a half in length, fly out at right angles to the bolt. Mr. Cherry's boatman was a man named Ed. Kline, who had had long years of experience on the Gulf Coast fishing-grounds. He was also an adept in throwing a harpoon, and the pair hoped to come across one of the mysterious "sea-devils" and capture it by means of the instrument they had borrowed.

Towards ten o'clock in the morning we had all reached our fishing-ground—fourteen boats in all. We had hardly got our lines out, however, when Mr. Cherry saw one of the "ocean vampires" basking in the sun a short distance from the end of the jetty, and called our attention to the fish. Its broad back, extended well above the surface of the water, showed that it must be of considerable size.

In order that two experienced men might be in the harpoon-boat, Mr. Cherry vacated it and his place was taken by J. H. Farley, another boatman. Kline and Farley then cautiously approached to within striking distance of the sea-devil. Kline had adjusted into the socket of the harpoon an iron rod, about eight feet long, which served as a handle to throw it with, being so arranged that it was released when the harpoon penetrated its object. Slowly and noiselessly the boat was brought to within a few feet of the slumbering fish; then Kline stood up and hurled the harpoon into it with all his strength.

The keen-pointed weapon sank several inches into the shapeless mass, and the monster fish, waking up, showed that it felt the pain of the blow by flopping the sea with its wing-like fins and then plunging straight down into the ocean's depth. The two boatmen, experienced as they were in the perils of the sea, hesitated for a moment as to whether they should sever the rope, which was now rushing out with startling rapidity. Before they could decide the question in their own minds the wounded sea-devil changed its course and began moving towards the open Gulf, dragging the boat after it at a speed that soon left the other boats, which had immediately started in pursuit, far behind. The skiff occupied by General Cleary and his boatman was in the lead, but was soon outstripped.

In its first rush seaward the monster made a run out of about six miles, and then described a circle. As it made this circle, General Cleary's boatman, cutting across the curve, attached his craft to Kline's boat, but there was no diminution of the speed of the big fish on account of the extra load. One by one, as the sea-devil circled, the other boats were attached to the line, until all fourteen boats and twenty-eight men were being towed by the fish. With this enormous load behind him the sea-devil still dashed hither and thither in the Gulf at a lively pace.

Would the monster never tire itself out? the sportsmen asked themselves. An hour, then two, passed, and it kept up its race through the water as rapidly as immediately after the harpoon was thrown. The battle seemed to have resolved itself into a test of endurance between the twenty-eight men in the boats and the single fish. The Gulf was fortunately calm, but a tropical sun beat down upon the men, and the fun of the thing began to pall on some of them. How much longer was the monster going to keep up the race? At the end of six hours he appeared to be every bit as strong as when he made his first headlong rush seaward. Once the monster towed his human freight twenty-five miles or more out into the Gulf, and it seemed to the long line of boatmen that they were to be carried far out on to the high seas. It was an adventurous

"KLINE STOOD UP AND HURLED THE HARPOON INTO IT WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH."

crowd, however, and no man among them cared to raise the first cry of "Enough!" Nevertheless, there was real danger in the business. Twice the sea-devil swerved suddenly from his course and made directly for the line of boats foaming along behind him, but fortunately passed under them without overturning any. Occasionally he would come to the surface of the water and throw himself about madly. Whenever he appeared the water was lashed into a boiling foam by his enormous wing-like fins.

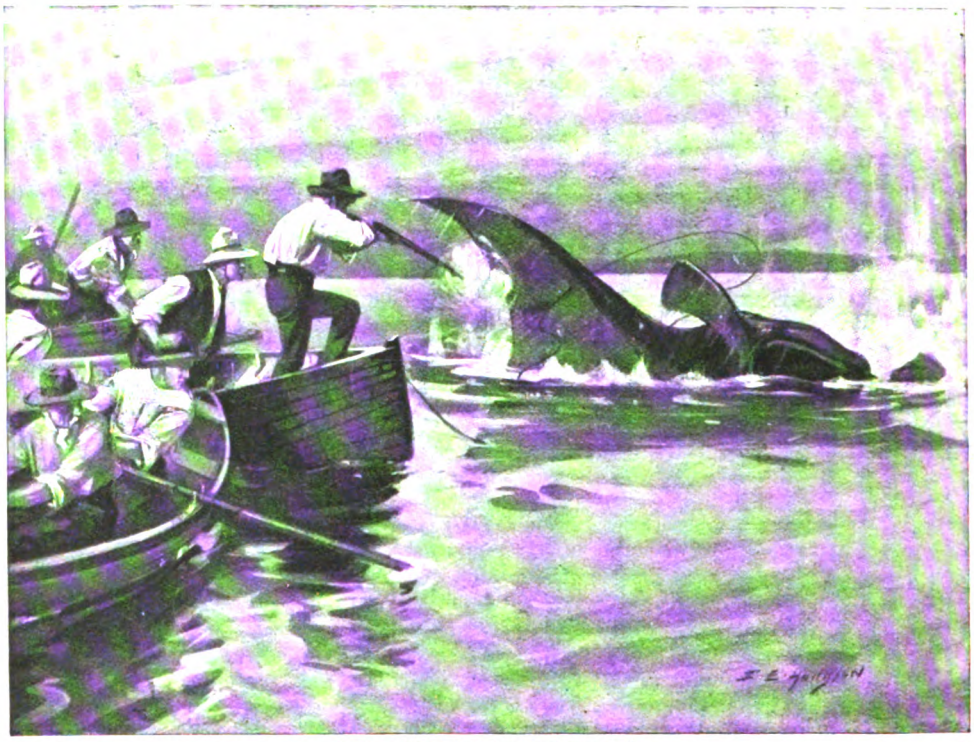
Messrs. Kline and Farley, who were still managing things at the head of the line, were determined to land the monster, and the remainder of our party decided to stay with them to the finish. We finally realized, however, that the fish could not be subdued without reinforcements; as things were at present it looked as if he might tow us about for ever. There is a life-saving station at the mouth of the Pass, and a signal of distress was accordingly hoisted in one of the boats for the purpose of obtaining assistance from that quarter. The watchman in the cupola of the life-saving station saw the signal through his glasses, and another look told him the cause of the trouble. J. C. Cotter, of the life-saving crew, came quickly to the scene in a gasolene launch. He brought with him another harpoon and a rifle carrying a 30-30 soft-nosed bullet. Walter Crow, of Waxahachie, Texas, also arrived upon the scene of battle in a launch. He got into the boat with Messrs. Kline and Farley, and assisted them to haul in the tow-rope in order to bring the monster fish to the surface, so that it could be harpooned a second time by Mr. Cotter. The fish was finally brought near the surface, and Mr. Cotter threw the second harpoon into it with all his force. It was thought that this second stroke would end the battle, but it seemed to have little effect upon the vitality of the monster. He threw one of his enormous flippers into the air when he felt the sting of the blow, and then made off again towards the open sea at full speed.

This remarkable fight, incredible as it may seem, continued for two hours more without any signs of exhaustion on the part of the sea-devil. He made the long circuit into the Gulf and back again to the narrow channel that runs between the two islands time after time, still dragging the boats and their occupants at a great pace.

The sportsmen were now beginning to suffer from thirst and hunger. The chase had lasted nearly nine hours, and was becoming very tiresome, even to those who had

nothing to do but sit in their boats and be hauled about by the unseen power beneath the water.

It was finally decided to try the effect of rifle bullets upon the creature, and after a hard struggle the fish was once again hauled to the surface, when Mr. Cotter fired into its body. It immediately sank far beneath



"MR. COTTER FIRED INTO ITS BODY."

the water and plunged madly onward through the Gulf. At last, however, to everyone's relief, it began to slow down and was promptly hauled to the surface once more. This time Mr. Cotter was able to fire two more bullets into the fish before it sank out of sight, leaving the water red with its blood. The last two bullets ended the struggle, and the boats came to a standstill.

With difficulty the creature's dead weight was hauled to the surface, and after much labour ropes were attached to its body and it was towed by a launch to the landing on the beach, where it required the services of all the available men to drag it ashore. It was estimated that the weight of the monster was fully three thousand pounds, and it measured fifteen feet across and nine feet in length. It was swung up by block and tackle, and photographed as shown at the head of this article.

The sea-devil had dragged the boats and men about for more than nine hours, and but for the fact that one of the bullets had broken its backbone it is believed that it would have kept going for many hours more. The mouth of the sea-devil is an enormous orifice, into which it scoops its food by means of flippers, one of which is attached to each side of the opening.

Altogether our fight with the monster was an experience that none of us would care to go through a second time. In addition to the constant risk of our boats being capsized by the monster, there was something uncanny about being hauled backwards and forwards through the waters of the Gulf by some hidden power of the deep. Other sea-devils were seen in the locality while we were there, but we made no effort to capture any of them. One victory of that kind is enough for a lifetime.

"LORD EDMUND HYDE ---Miss Hornhuter ; Miss Hornhuter---Lord Edmund Hyde."

Thus spoke the steward, and the two people introduced glanced at each other with mutual satisfaction.

"You look rather a poor sort of a human. But you're not stuck up. And it's something to have a lord for a partner--at least, I suppose he is a lord."

This remark was not, of course, made aloud ; but something of its meaning was reflected in Miss Hornhuter's face as she laid a large gloved hand on Lord Edmund's arm, and took an observation of the ball-room over the top of his lordship's bald head.

Lord Edmund was not, indeed, a favourable specimen, physically or mentally, of the order to which he belonged. He was generally regarded as a fool ; and for once the popular judgment was not far wrong. He had had energy enough, however, to quarrel with his father, the Duke of Leatherhead, with the result that he was ignored by the rest of the family. Worse than that, his income was reduced to a pittance of two hundred pounds a year, which he had of his own, supplemented by whatever sums he might acquire by borrowing.

In appearance Lord Edmund was short, spare, and bald but for a delicate shade—it was scarcely more substantial—of straw-coloured hair at the sides and back of his head. His movements were languid but graceful, his hands extremely small and white, his feet like those of a lady. In spite of his poverty he was always faultlessly dressed, and generally wore an expensive exotic in his button-hole.

At the present moment a somewhat dazed expression was visible on his placid, good-natured features. He could hardly realize his good fortune. That he should have even a chance of making himself agreeable to the famous Miss Hornhuter, the American millionairess, was a stroke of good fortune so far beyond his expectations that he felt a little bewildered. It seemed indeed unlikely that he would be able with his poor fortunes and his scanty opportunities to make any impression on the heart of Miss Hornhuter.

Yet more unlikely things had happened; and, oh! he thought, how glorious it would be to burst upon society as the husband of one of the richest women in the world! What a delicious revenge he might take upon those who had snubbed or ignored him because he was poor—a younger son with a small allowance! For twenty years—Lord Edmund was now six-and-forty—he had been trying to find an heiress who would consent to become Lady Edmund Hyde, but without success. And this was no ordinary heiress! The Hornhuter millions were well known. They might be called part and parcel of the scenery of New York, one of the attractions of Paris. Miss Hornhuter was known to be one of the wealthiest women in the world, if not absolutely the wealthiest.

The dance was a square one, so that Lord Edmund had plenty of opportunities for surveying his partner. She was certainly very tall—church-steepleish, in fact, and not particularly handsome. She might be a trifle over thirty; and there was an old-maidish thinness about her face. But the gown on her back had cost money: there could be no doubt about that. And in her hair there glittered some fine diamonds.

Lord Edmund made himself as agreeable as he could—asked his companion how long she had been in England, what she thought of the country, whether they had any fox-hunting in America, and the like. Without in the least intending it, he spoke to her very much in the patronizing tone that a big brother who has been there before uses to a little brother who has not. But Miss Hornhuter was not offended. She saw that he was doing his best to please her, and she tried to please him in return. When they separated after the dance he said to himself that although she was no beauty she was a good sort, and not bad-looking either, for a woman of her age.

And when she saw Lord Edmund bow with the utmost politeness to a very ugly damsel to whom Sir Godfrey Burnet introduced him, and observed that the middle-aged scion of nobility treated the plain, ill-dressed girl as deferentially as though she had been a princess, her heart warmed to the little bald-headed gentleman. So, when he came up later in the evening and asked whether she could not spare him another dance, she responded with something like alacrity; and when, afterwards, he asked permission to call on her at her hotel, she said that she was to be found in the Hornhuters' private sitting-room at the Hotel Metropole almost any afternoon between three and four.

Lord Edmund went in and won. He put the question one day when he had the good fortune to find her alone, and the lady made no difficulty about accepting him. Her front name, she told him, was Cornelia. But her school friends always called her Gwendoline, as being more romantic, and lending itself more easily to pet names. Lord Edmund was glad to hear it, but he determined that the subject of names had better be left in the background. A more important question was: Would Miss Hornhuter be satisfied with a quiet wedding? Considering the terms on which he stood with his relations, he scarcely saw how it could be anything else so far as he was concerned. To his relief his bride-elect assured him that a perfectly quiet wedding was what she had always hankered after, only she had thought that it would be out of place to propose it.

Lord Edmund was so pleased with her decision that he saluted his bride-elect with ardour, and the same afternoon paid a visit to a usurious lawyer, from whom he obtained a couple of hundred pounds—enough, he thought, to see them through the honeymoon.

The marriage was duly celebrated, one of the bride's cousins, whom the bridegroom just knew by sight, acting as bridesmaid. Then the happy pair set off for Switzerland.

They enjoyed themselves so much that the time went by with railroad speed, and Lord Edmund found himself one day very near the end of his resources. Of course, it did not really matter, but it was awkward to have to ask his bride for money before the end of the honeymoon. However, there was no help for it. Hotel bills have to be paid. So one morning Lord Edmund said to his wife, in as indifferent a manner as he could assume:—

"By the way, my love, did you bring a cheque-book with you?"

"A cheque-book? No! What should I do with a cheque-book?"

"When you want money, you know."

"Oh, Cousin Ethel used to give me some if I needed it."

"Oh, indeed! But there will have to be a different arrangement now, won't there?"

"Of course. Cousin Ethel would think it very strange if I were to apply to her for money now that I am married."

A horrible fear shook the soul of the little aristocrat. Had he married the wrong girl? The suspense was too painful.

"So you have no money, Cornelia?" he asked, pleasantly; "none to speak of, that is?"

"Not I. Good gracious, Edmund, you don't mean to say that you thought I was the heiress—that all Ethel's money belonged to me?"

"I'm afraid that I did imagine something of the kind," said the little man, ruefully. "But, there, my dear, it can't be helped," he added, soothingly, seeing alarming signs of a breakdown on his bride's face.

She mastered her emotion with an effort, and asked, calmly, "What did you want my cheque-book for?"

"I wanted you to—well, in fact, to write a cheque for the sum of our hotel bill."

"'SO YOU HAVE NO MONEY, CORNELIA?' HE ASKED, PLEASANTLY."

"Haven't you a cheque-book yourself?"

"Certainly; but it's of precious little use at present."

"Do you mean that you haven't money enough to settle the bill?"

"Oh, yes, I have got enough for that, but not much more."

The bride, in her turn, looked puzzled.

"You haven't deceived me, Edmund, have you?" she said, with tremulous voice, going up to her husband and laying her hand on his arm. "You are really Lord Edmund Hyde, aren't you?"

"Good heavens, yes! Who else should I be?"

"And the Duke of Leatherhead is your father?"

"Certainly. But we've quarrelled. If you had had all that money, you see, the quarrel would soon have been made up. But as it is there's not the smallest use in applying to him."

The bride said nothing. She was furtively wiping away a tear.

"This comes of too much delicacy, and doing things in a hurry," he said to himself. Aloud he added: "So we both were under a bit of a delusion? Well, we must console one another, that's all."

Lady Edmund made no reply.

"What's that you are studying?" he asked her a minute later.

"I'm looking up our train. We can't stay here till we spend our last franc. The sooner we set about getting some more money the better."

"Very true, my dear; but how you are going to do it I can't imagine."

They started for Calais that very night, and were in London next day.

Lord Edmund took his disappointment with characteristic coolness. His scanty hair was as carefully brushed as usual; his manner was gentle, languid, serene as ever.

Lady Edmund, on the other hand, was nervous, irritable, and abstracted. She watched the flying landscape as the train brought them up from Dover with anxious eyes that looked from under a pair of closely-knitted brows. When her husband addressed her she answered absently or made no reply, so that he watched her curiously.

"Edmund," she said, abruptly, "I am going to see your father."

Lord Edmund started with surprise, and

regarded his wife as he might have done if she had declared her intention of swimming back across the Straits of Dover.

"I have been thinking whether I would take you with me, but I think not. I had better go alone."

"Cornelia, you'd better drop it," said her husband, with more energy than he had yet displayed. "As for me, he'd tell the servants to kick me out of the castle if I were fool enough to put my foot in it. And as I have a natural desire to save you from insult, you will oblige me by giving up this idea."

"But, Edmund, our situation is desperate—you said so yourself on board the boat; and who else is there we can apply to—unless it were Cousin Ethel?" she added, with a blush.

"BUT, EDMUND, OUR SITUATION IS DESPERATE—YOU SAID SO YOURSELF ON BOARD THE BOAT."

"No, no," he said, hastily; "that would never do. And neither would it do for you to go to Leatherbourne. I tell you you don't know the sort of man my father is. I won't have you insulted, Cornelia. You mustn't think of it."

To this Cornelia made no reply; but when Lord Edmund awoke next morning he found that he was alone, and a note on the dressing-table informed him that his wife had disobeyed his injunctions, and was now on her way to Leatherhead Castle to interview her father-in-law.

When she arrived at the station she found that the castle was not far off, reckoning as the crow flies, but the road was a winding one, leading through the town of Leatherbourne and thence to the park entrance. Lady Edmund was fortunate in finding a fly at the station, and she drove off at once.

In spite of her determination the heart of the fair American sank within her as she surveyed the imposing stone front of the castle, with its pillared portico.

When she arrived at the vestibule, which was to her mind like the entrance to some grand cathedral, she was received by a stately person of affable manners, whose dress and demeanour had a sub-clerical flavour. This personage advanced bowing, and summoned with a gesture a richly-attired footman to take the lady's card.

"I want to see the Duke of Leatherhead," she said, firmly.

The ecclesiastical person deeply regretted that his Grace did not receive that day, and an argument seemed to be imminent, when the footman put the lady's card under the nose of the house steward. That gentleman, recognising that the case was one beyond his jurisdiction, and fearing to make a blunder, showed Lady Edmund with every mark of respect into a side-room, and hastened to carry the card to the Duke himself.

Lady Edmund sat down and waited. When five minutes had gone by and no one appeared, she came to the conclusion that her father-in-law was not a gentleman. But the necessity for conciliating him was great, so she curbed her impatience. Another period of five minutes went by, and then the steward appeared, bearing her card in his hand, and wearing an apologetic look on his clean-shaven, gentlemanly countenance.

"His Grace deeply regrets, madam, that he has not the honour of your acquaintance," he said—an emendation of the original text, which ran: "Tell her to go to the devil!"

The American sprang to her feet, towering over the official by the best part of a foot.

"Tell his Grace that there's no reason why

he shouldn't make my acquaintance before he is a day older, and the sooner the better."

"I'm afraid it would be useless for me to take that message to his Grace," said the steward, with a smile.

"You go and tell him what I say."

The steward's manner was so deprecatory, so bland, so strictly non-committal, that he had quite an episcopal air, as he stood "washing his hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water," and saying not a word.

"TELL HIS GRACE THAT THERE'S NO REASON WHY HE SHOULDN'T MAKE MY ACQUAINTANCE."

"Are you going to take his Grace my message, or are you not?" demanded the lady, wrathfully.

"I think it would be better not, my lady."

"And he told you to turn me out of the house, did he?"

"Well, his Grace didn't wish to be disturbed this afternoon; but, perhaps, after writing and appointing an interview——"

The American was on the point of delivering a pungent message for transmission to the invisible Duke, but she restrained herself, partly from a well-founded apprehension that the message would never reach his Grace's ears.

The fly had not departed, for the very sufficient reason that the flyman had not been paid, and very soon Lady Edmund was on her way to the railway station.

Before her short drive was over her anger had—not evaporated, but yielded to the pressure of other emotions. The poor woman was hungry, chilled, and cruelly disappointed, as well as bitterly humiliated.

Tears of vexation rose unbidden to her eyes as she stood at the window of the wooden shed that served as a waiting-room at the railway station, and gazed out at the rain-blurred landscape. A row of unsightly buildings tumbling to decay, adorned with a tottering notice-board with the familiar words, "To be let or sold," fronted her at the other side of the roadway. A mile beyond among the trees rose the turrets of the castle from which she had been ignominiously expelled half an hour before. A little way below the tumble-down buildings just mentioned were some bare wooden erections, the meaning of which was not apparent. A glance at the local newspaper, which was lying on the table of the waiting room, and which Cornelia took up to pass away the time and make her, if possible, forget her unhappiness, informed her that the Prince and Princess of Wales, and a number of other highly-distinguished guests, were going to stay at the castle during the race week. The woodwork was no doubt the beginning of a triumphal arch, or the foundation for stands. It was natural that the poor lady should think wistfully of the glory and the joy that would have been hers as the wife of the only married son of the house, if it had not been for the abominable behaviour of the Duke.

She rose from the bench on which she had been sitting, threw the paper aside, and went back to her former place at the window. The rain-sodden road was deserted but for a large manure cart—unsightly object!—which was slowly passing along towards the village. The carter and his horse seemed to feel the

depressing influence of the weather, as they dragged themselves wearily along. They passed the ruinous buildings facing the station at a foot pace—had they gone quicker this history might never have been written. For at that moment an idea, rich in possibilities, was conceived in the brain of the quick-witted American. She was pleased with it; a humorous smile enlarged the corners of her mouth. She pooh-poohed it, sent it away. It returned; she petted it—dwelt on it with inward satisfaction. She pondered it, laughed aloud, and finally determined to adopt it.

"'I GUESS YOU'D BETTER LET ME MAKE YOU AN ALLOWANCE, AUNTIE,' SAID MISS ETHEL."

She was so much absorbed by it that she forgot her hunger, and all the way back to town she was devising methods for giving effect to her purpose.

When she reached Victoria she went at once to see her niece, the rich Miss Hornhuter. Strange to say, there had been a slight coldness between aunt and niece at the time of the marriage. Miss Ethel Hornhuter considered that her aunt had been unduly reserved, and had sprung the Duke's son upon them in rather a shabby way. So Lady Edmund might have kept out of her way but for her present necessities. But as soon as she had confided to the ears of her niece the sad truth that, although she was indubitably the daughter-in-law of a Duke, she did not know where to turn for a ten-pound note, pique vanished and a complete reconciliation was effected.

"I guess you'd better let me make you an allowance, auntie," said Miss Ethel.

"No, my dear, that would never do. I have a husband, and it is his place to support me."

"But you've just told me that he can't!"

"That is the fault of his father, who has never taught him to do anything useful, or anything whereby he might earn a living. Therefore it seems to me that it is his father's duty to make us an allowance."

"All very true; but from what you have told me I should think you might wait till your hair was grey before he would do anything of the kind."

"But I mean to make him do his duty."

"You, Cornelia? He will only laugh at you and insult you again."

"He won't. He won't have the chance."

"But you can't force him to support his son and you."

"Can't I? We'll see. Can you lend me a hundred pounds?"

"Five hundred if you like."

"Thank you, but one hundred will do. If it doesn't, you may see me hanging about with a basket of oranges on my arm next time you go to the theatre."

Lady Edmund got her hundred pounds, and went back to the hotel at which she had left her husband. He was sitting alone with a letter in his hand, which he was reading with a very rueful expression of countenance.

"What have you got there, Edmund?" demanded his wife.

"Oh, nothing. A man wants me to go yachting to Norway with him, and—but it's no use. Of course, I can't go."

"I think it is the best thing you can do," said his wife, after a moment's thought. "I can pay a visit to my relations in the meantime, and something may have happened to put things right by the time you come back."

"Do you really think so, Cornelia?"

"I do, indeed. The sooner you set off the better. But I want you to sign a power of attorney, I think they call it, in my favour before you go."

"Certainly, if you wish it. But why?"

"In order that I may be able to manage things for you in your absence."

"What things?"

"Oh, all sorts of things. Anything that may turn up. And that reminds me—you haven't asked me where I have been all day."

"I supposed you were with your people."

"No; I have been with yours," said Lady Edmund, grimly; and she gave her husband a modified account of what had taken place. Lord Edmund was furious, and, as he could not very well horsewhip his own father, he was inclined to be angry with Cornelia for risking such humiliation as she had met with. He was about to write a letter of indignant remonstrance to the Duke, but his wife forbade it. "You just leave it to me, Edmund," said she. "By the time you get home from your yachting I will have settled that score, at all events."

Lord Edmund stared, but made no reply. Five minutes later he was deep in the preparations for the trip to Norway.

The yacht was to sail next day, for Lord Edmund had been asked to fill a vacant place at the last moment. His wife saw him off, and then drove off to the City in a cab to begin her campaign. Her first visit was to a firm of solicitors, her next to a printer's; the one after that was to a firm of building contractors. Three days she remained in town, making such arrangements as she deemed necessary. Then she went down to Leatherbourne, and there she abode.

Just one week after the abortive visit of Lady Edmund Hyde to the castle of her husband's ancestors, his Grace the Duke of Leatherhead rang his bell with vehemence at eight o'clock in the morning.

"What is making that confounded smell, Vickars?" demanded the Duke. "Tell them to stop it at once—at once, do you hear?"

The Duke turned on his other side and tried to go to sleep again, but it was impossible. An incomprehensible, all-pervading, and most disquieting effluvium pervaded the castle from cellar to flagstaff. Again his Grace pulled madly at the bell-rope.

"What is that fiendish odour, Vickars? I insist upon knowing!"

"I think, please your Grace, it is something in the hair," answered the man.

"Something in the hair? Whose hair? Send him to me at once!"

"I didn't mean the 'air of the 'ead, your Grace," said Vickars, respectfully, but firmly. "I allooded to the hair of the hatmosphere."

"Oh, the hair of the hatmosphere, is it? Well, all I can say is, I don't admire the atmosphere's taste in hair-oils. Take someone with a little sense along with you and find out what is making the smell."

No discovery was made; the obnoxious odour died away as mysteriously as it had come. But shortly before lunch it came back with renewed vigour. It was awful. It resembled the smell of glue, hair, and bones all burning together in some infernal witch cauldron. It was overpowering, intolerable.

The Duke told his steward to find out at once what was the cause of the nuisance, and the moment lunch was over he drove into the village to see whether some orders he had given with reference to the forthcoming visit of the Prince and Princess had been punctually carried out. From the village he proceeded to the railway station, and on his way thither his eyes met a sight which filled him with amazement, horror, and wrath unspeakable.

The old brewery was transfigured, and looked as gay as paint and bunting could make it. From a tall Venetian mast on the roof depended the English and American flags; and the word "Welcome," in gigantic letters of red, white, and blue alternately, threatened to rob the spectator of his eyesight. But that was nothing. On an immense sign-board, just below the "Welcome," there appeared the following legend:—

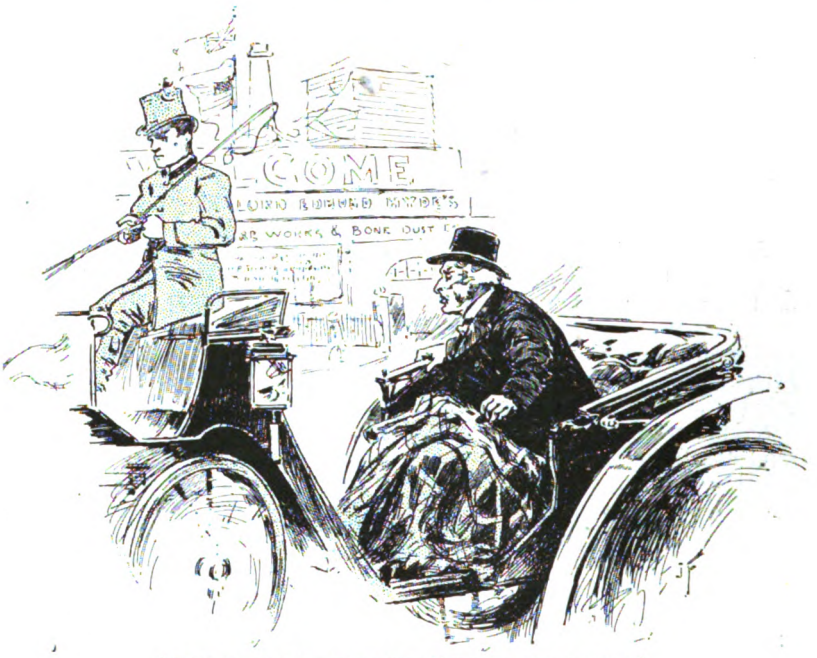
LORD EDMUND HYDE'S
ARTIFICIAL MANURE WORKS AND BONE-DUST EMPORIUM.

Guano superseded!
No more expensive and useless fertilizers. Nature's own phosphates only recommended.
Your own bones ground while you wait.
One trial solicited.
Sole Licensee and Proprietor,
LORD EDMUND HYDE.

Beneath the signature (in flaming capitals) was a gross caricature of the family coat of arms and motto.

"This is—this is—an outrage!" stuttered his Grace, barely able to articulate from sheer passion.

One minute later the Duke—an elderly, stout, red-faced man, with a voice like that of a skipper of a North Sea fishing-smack in a gale of wind—forced his way into a barely-furnished office, the "counting-house" of the



"'THIS IS—THIS IS—AN OUTRAGE!' STUTTERED HIS GRACE."

newly-established manure works. There sat Lady Edmund Hyde surrounded by various unsavoury substances.

"What is the meaning of this, madam?" vociferated his Grace. "I insist upon that scandalous sign-board being taken down at once—at once, do you hear?"

Lady Edmund slowly adjusted her pince-nez, and regarded the irate nobleman critically, but made no reply.

"Do you hear me?" shouted the peer, striking the deal table with his fist. "I don't leave this place till I see that scandalous sign-board taken down!"

"Then I am afraid you will have to stay all night, and a good many nights, Duke," said the lady. "Meanwhile I shall try not to forget that I am your daughter-in-law."

"My what?"

Then the facts in all their significance dawned on his Grace's comprehension, with the result of making him ten times more angry than before.

"You sha'n't blackmail me, you——" and there followed some very ugly epithets.

"My Lord Duke," said Cornelia, rising, "there are some things to which no woman is bound to submit. You turned me out of your house the other day. Don't make it necessary for me to turn you out of my office. James!"

A brawny fellow, powdered all over with bone-dust, answered the summons, and asked with a grin what his mistress wanted.

This sobered the Duke effectually.

"Tell me what you want," he said, with a vicious snarl. "Money, I suppose."

"If it comes to a question of dollars," said the fair American, "I guess our family could buy up your whole show—title, estate, castle, body, and soul—and not miss the price. But I mean that my husband shall support me, and I mean you to do what is right by your son."

"If my son has married into a family of such wealth," sneered the Duke, "he cannot possibly stand in need of assistance from me. But if you can give me Edmund's address, I dare say this matter can be amicably arranged."

"I can't give you Edmund's address, because he hasn't got one at present; but I am here to represent him. I hold a power of attorney signed by him, and it's me your Grace has got to deal with this time."

Another burst of rage followed; and when it was over the Duke said, sullenly, that he would listen to nothing till the sign-board was taken down.

Lady Edmund shook her head with a smile.

"I'm afraid, your Grace, that is quite impossible. But I think your Grace may change your mind about coming to terms, so it may be convenient to mention our

"ANOTHER BURST OF RAGE FOLLOWED."

solicitors' name. You will find it in this prospectus. We mean to post it to your guests when the Prince and Princess are here next week, besides advertising it afterwards in the local newspapers. I think under the circumstances the shares ought to go off well —don't you?"

Without understanding what was said to him the Duke crammed the papers his daughter-in-law handed to him into his pocket and hurried out of the place, being constrained to hold his nose while crossing the yard.

On the way home he glanced at the papers that had been thrust into his hand. A new outrage—if possible a more deadly one than the other. This was nothing less than the prospectus of a limited liability company for the acquiring and carrying on of the chemical manure works "lately established by Lord Edmund Hyde." The hateful document was adorned by three horrible "process" smudges. The first was a view of his own castle—Leatherhead Castle; the second was a representation, absurdly magnified, of the new chemical manure works; and the third was a vile caricature—so it seemed to his Grace—of the family arms, with the motto underneath in capital letters, "RIEN COMME LE CUIR," accompanied, horrible to relate, by the interpretation thereof: "Nothing like leather."

The prospectus set forth in glowing terms the large profits that might be expected from the manufacture of bone-dust and similar manures. It expatiated on the convenience of the site that had been secured, "close to a railway station and within easy reach of the ancestral home of the managing director, Lord Edmund Hyde."

The idea of the Prince of Wales and his other guests receiving a copy of this precious document while staying at the castle was insupportable; so was the idea of allowing their Royal Highnesses to be poisoned by the fumes of what would no doubt be called the family manufactory. It was evident that the thing must be stopped, and there was not much time to act in, for the Prince's visit was only three days off. It was evident that the attack had been maliciously timed so as to hit the Duke when he was least able to defend himself.

The Duke went to his lawyer and talked of perpetual injunctions, but the man of law shook his learned head. It might be weeks, he said, before an injunction was granted; and then it might not be granted at all. As for the projected company, no Court of law would interfere so long as the forms prescribed by the statutes were followed. The only thing to be done was to come to terms.

After a long conference between the Duke's lawyer and Lady Edmund, an arrangement was made whereby the lease of the old brewery was transferred to the Duke, and an undertaking given that the prospectuses of the new company should not be issued. The Duke agreed to make his son an allowance of one thousand pounds per annum, to be suspended if Lord Edmund accepted office under the Crown with a salary of at least a thousand a year. This clause was inserted at the Duke's instance; and he was justified in his forecast, for within a year the King's advisers, hitherto oblivious of Lord Edmund's merits, offered him a post in the War Office with a salary of fifteen hundred a year. Lady Edmund's victory was complete.

RUGBY FOOTBALL:

The Science of Centre Play.

By Rhys T. Gabe (Cardiff and Wales).

THESE are (or should be) the days of scientific football. The old days of supreme individualism have passed away, and though there is still a large place for individualism in the Rugby game (without the possession of it in a certain measure a player can do very little), yet the main teaching of modern football theory is that a team must be combined, and that scientific combination is the greatest necessity if good football is to be played and matches are to be won. Every section of the team has its own share of the work, and I am not going to say that one section is more important than another, for what is wanted is a team strong at all points—forward, half, three-quarter, and full back—strong in heeling, passing, running, kicking, tackling, and dribbling. But when all is said, given the possession of all these qualities, the difference between a great team and a moderate team will turn upon the power of those players whose special duty it is to initiate attack — the half-backs and the centre three-quarters. Assume that a team possesses good scrummaging and heeling forwards, and that the half-backs are moderately good. (If the half-backs are superlatively good it does rather affect the situation, for great halves will pull moderate centres through.) If the halves are of only average capacity the centre has a vast responsibility, since upon him chiefly rests the inspiration of attack. In other words, he has to plan the movement, to do just that amount of work which makes it possible to gain ground, and to do it in such a way as to give the wings the best possible chance to use their powers.

An Ideal Centre.

To be effective, a centre three-quarter should possess physical strength and endurance; resolution both in running and tackling; that quality which is called opportunism (which includes quickness of perception, good judgment founded upon thorough knowledge of the game, and promptitude of action); ability to kick with both feet; a safe pair of hands for catching and taking passes; precision in passing; and fearlessness in picking up in front of a rush in order to kick to safety.

A centre who is a real sprinter will often beat a defender by sheer pace; but it is necessary, of course, that he should have the capacity to dodge and swerve (which are not quite the same thing). As for strength and endurance, it is often necessary that a centre should compel an opponent to tackle him, and a little, light man cannot very well be expected to withstand the shock of frequent impact with big, heavy opponents, though it is a comparatively small matter to a man of good physique.

One quality is of supreme importance in the modern game—a centre must be able to take a pass with certainty, and to give one with accuracy. Failure in this direction, though all the other qualities are possessed, will often rob a man's side of victory, for in a closely-contested game only on a few occasions will there be the opportunity to score, and a pass missed or badly given at the critical moment often makes all the difference between victory and defeat. Therefore there must be constant practice in passing.

In giving passes the two hands should invariably be used, as greater accuracy can be attained than by passing a ball with one hand. In initiating attack, a player

(whether centre or otherwise) should carry the ball in both hands, swinging his arms in readiness for the pass. When he has burst through in an individual effort to score, and there is no necessity for passing, he may tuck the ball under his arm if he likes, but so long as he is thinking of combination he ought not so to dispose of it. A second reason for the two-handed pass is that it is generally quicker and more direct. Another is that it enables a man to feint to pass, for it is only in rare cases (Percy Bush is one of them) that a man who passes with one hand can lead his opponents to believe that he is going to part with the ball and still retain possession. A pass should be given at the level of the hips and about two feet in front of the player for whom it is intended, so that he will be induced to strain forward — to increase his pace if possible, and not to retard his motion, in order to take the ball.

"TWO HANDS SHOULD INVARIABLY BE USED, AS GREATER ACCURACY CAN BE ATTAINED THAN BY PASSING A BALL WITH ONE HAND."

With regard to swerving, different men have different methods. A man ought to try to swerve while at practice. Get a friend to stand still, and then run up to him and break to the left after bearing to the right, and vice versa. Most men in play try to get their opponents moving in one direction and swerve to the opposite side; but that versatile and brilliant wing three-quarter, E. T. Morgan (with whom I was proud to be associated in many International matches and in the Anglo-Australian tour of 1904), used to feint to swerve to the left, then to the right, and eventually go to the left. Unlike most men, however, he could swerve either way, and I certainly recommend all players to try to acquire this power.

ATTACK.

The object of a centre should be to beat or draw the defence in such a manner as to leave the way open or easy for a fellow-player to score. In football parlance he should "make openings." How is this to be done? He should start with the assumption that he is able to beat his opponent for pace, and he should not attempt to dodge, but should try to get through between his own individual opponent and the centre or wing who is watching his *confrère*. He may be sufficiently fast to get through, but if not quite fast enough for that he should draw the man who is watching his comrade, and it only needs a proper pass to gain ground, and perhaps to secure a score.

There is a danger of overdoing this outpacing mode of attack. It is a too common fault for centres to run across the field without making headway, and once a centre has got into this bad habit it seems very difficult to run "straight." It is almost fatal for a centre to get into this habit. He must be prepared to take some risks, and he must run straight as a general rule — at any rate, he must gain ground. The wonderful success of the New Zealanders was due chiefly to the fact that their backs generally ran so straight. The great difference between the New Zealanders and the South Africans was that the latter relied more upon the pace of their wings and less upon the individual cleverness of their centres.

There are two ways of developing attack by combined running—both scientific, and both to be practised by every team. One is for the halves or centres to cut through before passing; the other is for the halves and centres to get the ball out to the wing just as fast as it will travel from hand to hand. Very many of the South Africans' tries were

scored by this direct passing, often without a single man on the opposite side being beaten except by the wing outflanking the defence and racing in, in consequence of greatly superior pace.

Thus a centre occasionally best serves his side by simply getting the ball out to the wing, for sometimes, through carelessness on the part of opponents, a wing is given a clear field if only he can get the ball promptly. With a man of exceptional pace—if given room to move—only possession of the ball is

A B C are the attackers. A, the left centre, is carrying the ball. He makes straight for D, his own opponent, and B will also make towards D. As they approach, if E has not anticipated the movement and closed in to meet B, A will give B a pass, and he will slip through between D and E. If E has foreseen the danger, A either keeps the ball and tries to swerve to the left, or he misses B and throws the ball to C, who also has borne towards the left. It is long odds that F is not prepared for this movement.

"THE OTHER METHOD IS FOR THE CENTRE TO BEAT A MAN OR TWO BEFORE PASSING."

necessary in such a case. The other method is for the centre to beat a man or two before passing.

Some Problems.

Where opponents are equal in pace, other means of attack must be resorted to. A method which has been practised with success by some Welsh teams consists of the attacking centres, one of whom is carrying the ball, converging upon one opponent.

F

E

D

A

B

C

Another problem in attack may be thus stated. A receives the ball from the half, and passes immediately to B. B attempts to run between D and E. If D closes inward to meet B, a reverse pass to A should be successful; if D does not run to meet B, A will run behind B towards F to take a pass, and in due course A and C will face F. It was exactly in the latter way that Wales scored the first try against Ireland in March, 1907. The reverse pass from wing to centre is not so much practised as it should be, while the reverse pass from centre to centre is very rarely utilized. But they are points of scientific play which three-quarters ought to get fairly fixed in their minds in order that they may be brought into use in actual play.

PUNTING.

There are some three-quarters who are very fond of getting up level with the scrummage (sometimes in front of it) for purposes of defence. The cross-punt is very useful as a means of circumventing them, for a well-directed kick across the field gives a decided advantage to the kicker's side, since the too-anxious defenders have to turn round before they can start in pursuit of the ball. Sometimes the cross-punt carries the ball completely clear of the defenders, and if the attackers have a sprinter on the wing there is a very good chance of a score. Another mode of attack through kicking is the high punt. In this case you depend upon following up and the possible mulls of opponents. Another form of attack is what may be called the half-length punt, by which the ball is dropped over the opposing three-quarters and short of the full back, so that he cannot possibly run in to catch it. Thus the attacking side, by sharp following up, are more likely to reach the ball first, especially if there is the least hesitation on the part of the defenders. Of course, there is the drop at goal, but this, in my opinion, should only be attempted when there appears to be no chance of scoring a try, because, if it fails, as is most often the case, it gives relief to the opposing side. In some cases the only thing for a centre to do is to dribble; but it is not a form of attack to be recommended, except in cases of necessity.

Punting to touch, both as a deliberate method of attack (perhaps I should say as a means of obtaining an attacking position) and for defensive purposes, is a very important part of a centre's duty. The young player should go on the field at practice with the serious intention of learning to punt to touch accurately. To do this he should practise punting to the touch-line from all parts of the field. With regard to tackling, a young player should never attempt to tackle higher than the hips. When faced by two attackers, a defender should never hesitate, but should tackle the man with the ball. There is always the chance of the carrier being a selfish man, or that his pass may be spoilt by the effort to tackle him. If two attackers face a single opponent, the man with the ball should run straight, if anything bearing away from his *confrère* and not towards him, so that the defender may not be drawn upon the man to whom the pass is to be given. While I believe that a scientific centre is born and not made—football genius is a gift—there is no doubt that a player can improve his natural gifts and eradicate faults by giving serious thought to the problems of play, to which end I hope that the few hints I have given may be useful.

"THE ATTACKING SIDE, BY SHARP FOLLOWING UP, ARE MORE LIKELY TO REACH THE BALL FIRST."

Aurora's Tame Whitesmith.

By Tom Gallon.

"I SHALL be as careful of it, mum, as if it was my own. You do your little toddle into the country, an' sleep peaceful at nights; my mission's to do the worryin' 'ere below."

Miss Aurora Petunia Emma Gibbs stood calmly and quite respectfully before the Misses Burningham; she finished her extraordinary speech with a cheerful nod. As the Misses Burningham—dear, innocent-minded elderly sisters, in whose household the wonderful Aurora was a new importation—were not quite used to that damsel and her ways, they could merely gasp, and glance at each other as if asking which should be bold enough to administer a reproof. A week ago they would have been ready, either one of them, with a chilling retort; but a week of Aurora was a liberal education to anyone, and they had received their education, in that short space of time, with becoming meekness.

In person Aurora was not strikingly beautiful, although, as she herself remarked with complacency, she "'ad points"; and certainly the "points" were, for the most part, mere projections, which had an awkward way of coming in contact with breakable articles of furniture. For the rest, her character was unimpeachable, and her confidence in herself amazing; a product of London at its sharpest, she was never at a loss, and her vocabulary was weird and wonderful. Yet she was employed as general servant to the highly respectable Misses Burningham, resident in the most select part of Tooting.

If, before that week had ever obtruded itself into their lives, you had suggested that such a person could become a part of their establishment, they would have regarded you with contempt and pity; and but for a very worthy woman, who had been with them nearly a quarter of a century, suddenly marrying an elderly widower in the building line, and so leaving them in the lurch, Aurora would never have gone there at all. But after advertising in various directions, and being much flustered by interviews at registry offices and other terrible places, it came to a question of Aurora or nothing; so they chose Aurora.

There was a battle royal, to begin with, in regard to her name. She coolly gave them the choice between "Aurora" and "Petunia"—or two pounds on her wages.

"I've never bin called out of me name, an' I carn't begin now for fourteen quid a year, mum," she explained, with dignity. "I should 'ave thought meself you'd 'ave bin proud to 'ave sich a name abaht the place; I'll lay there ain't sich another in the road. Not a bad idea to call the 'ouse by it; give a sort o' tone to things."

At the height of the discussion Miss Dorcas Burningham discovered that the girl had that third and more commonplace name of Emma; she pounced upon it, and insisted upon it, and Aurora gave way. And at the end of a week they had discovered that she was such an admirable servant that they forgave her vulgarities and her familiarities, to say nothing of her long conversations with the butcher and the baker, and would have called her by any name in order to keep her. And at the end of the week there happened an event which made them see a mysterious hand of Providence in the coming of the girl to the house at all.

It became necessary that the Misses Burningham should leave home. In the excitement of parting with their late domestic and securing the new one they had overlooked the fact that the time had arrived for their annual visit of a few days to an elderly male cousin, of irascible temper but vast wealth, on whose bounty they were to a great extent dependent. It would never do for the two poor old ladies to forego their visit, and run the risk of offending their patron; yet, on the other hand, there was the small house and its somewhat valuable contents to be thought of. Was it possible that they could trust this new servant to take charge of everything, and to lay down her life, if necessary, for the protection of the place?

They held a council of war, and decided that it was the only thing to be done. Miss Dorcas explained to Miss Hannah that, pro-

vided they were careful in giving the girl explicit directions as to what she was to do, and also what she was not to do; and provided also that they told her what rooms she must never enter, and what doors she must never leave unlocked, and what windows she must keep closed, nothing could go very far wrong.

"A DEAL TOO MUCH FUSS IS MADE ABOUT THE MEN, TO MY THINKIN'."

"There's only one thing, my dear," said Miss Hannah, "and that is of the utmost importance. We can put it in two words, and we shall be safe—'No followers'!"

"Exactly," said Miss Dorcas, with a grim nod. "They come in to say soft things to the girl, and walk off with the silver. A very happy thought, Hannah; she must not let anyone into the place while we're away—chain on the front door, and hold herself in readiness to scream 'Fire!' out of the top window if a man so much as knocks at the door. I'm glad you thought of that; we'll speak about it at once."

Thus it happened that Aurora was summoned before the two elderly ladies and the situation explained to her; and that explanation called forth the remark concerning the custody of the house which we have already heard.

"You will clearly understand, Emma, that no man of any description is to enter the house — except, in case of emergency, a policeman — and then, of course, only if your life is in danger."

"Sooner see meself cut up in little bits than 'ave a p'liceman near me," said Aurora, with a fine air of contempt. "Carn't think wot some gels see in 'em. Don't you worry, mum; I sha'n't let nobody in."

"It is our duty to warn you, Emma," said Miss Dorcas Burningham, severely, "that if by any chance such a thing should happen—or if a follower, as they are commonly called, put in an appearance here — we should be compelled to discharge you at once."

"An' I'd go cheerful, an' kiss me 'and at partin', so to speak," replied Aurora, solemnly. "A deal too much fuss is made about the men, to my thinkin'; I should jest like to ketch one of 'em so much as darin' to look at me! Give yer an instance, mum; there was a plumber at work at my larst place, wot put 'is arm round me one day, an', says 'e——"

"That will do, Emma, thank you," broke in both ladies at once. "We have the utmost faith in you, and we know that you are to be depended on. We will have a four-wheeled cab at the door at exactly ten minutes past two, if you please—and you will take the man's number."

"'Old the 'orse for yer, if yer like, mum," said the obliging Aurora, as she left the room.

Aurora Gibbs, from the moment of fetching the cab, began to enjoy her new independence. She flung a scathing remark at the unfortunate cabman relative to the probable age of his steed; she cheerfully bade the elderly ladies "good-bye," and closed the door, and rattled the chain fiercely in order to relieve their minds at parting; to appear in an easy attitude on the doorstep immediately the cab had turned the corner, and to survey the street with a fine air of proprietorship.

"As fer not usin' the best rooms, I should like ter know wot best rooms is made for," said Aurora, as she removed her cap and apron, and strolled in a leisurely fashion through the prim apartments sacred to the Misses Burningham. "Now fer a week of bliss—now fer a week of no bells, an' no need to be careful wot language you uses to anybody!"

The prospect appeared a good one at first, but after two days it began to pall. On the third night she went early to bed and dreamed

that the Misses Burningham had come home unexpectedly, and were creeping up the stairs in order to surprise her doing something she should not have been doing. The dream was so real that she woke up, and sat up in bed and listened.

"Funny!" muttered Aurora, rubbing her eyes. "Sounds as if there reelly was someone movin' abaht—or did I fergit to shut up the cat? 'Ere—'alf a mo'! If I do ketch you walkin' over things, my lady, I'll soon show yer——"

Aurora rose from her bed and hastily threw on a bright red petticoat, with a fancy border in black; thrust her feet into list slippers of a comfortable shape, and caught up from a chair a striped woollen antimacassar, which she threw with easy grace round her shoulders. Her head was adorned with a series of hard and uncompromising metal "curlers." I hesitate to give such full details of a lady's toilet, but I am anxious that the strange effect of her appearance should be fully appreciated.

Miss Aurora Gibbs carried a candle, and went down yawning and somewhat peevish as to temper. Suddenly, however, the yawn stopped in the middle and her teeth closed sharply, opening again a moment later to permit a sharp breath to whip out the candle flame. Then, with her heart beating a little above the normal, she set the candlestick on the stairs and crept down, with eyes straining to pierce the darkness. For something other than a cat was moving stealthily in the house.

The slight sound came from the dining-room; Aurora, watching carefully, saw a little round patch of light travel along the carpet near the door, and disappear. With a courage that had never been called upon in such an emergency before she descended the stairs, and actually sauntered into the room itself. There was a startled exclamation, and the instant disappearance of a little shaft of light; then only the deep breathing of some person in the darkness.

"Mistook the 'ouse, 'aven't you?" asked Miss Gibbs, airily. "Sorry I carn't see yer face; that's the worst of these dark evenings—ain't it?"

Silence for a moment or two, while Miss Gibbs stood still; then a deep voice came in a sort of shaking growl out of the darkness. "I'm des'prit—that's wot I am," said a man's voice. "I'm armed—an' I'll blow anyone's brains out that stands in my way."

"Nice voice you've got, young man," said Aurora, quietly. "If I could on'y see it, I should say you'd almost got wot you might call a singin' face. Like a game of forfeits—ain't it?—this torkin' in the dark."

"Never mind wot it's like; you go back to bed," said the man's voice again. "I know you're all alone, an' I don't want to do you no 'arm; you go back to bed, an' leave me alone. The two ole gels is away, an' there's on'y you left be'ind—an' I swear I don't want to 'urt you. Go away, an' swear you never saw me."

"I could swear that easy, you preferrin' darkness to light, like the 'eathen," said Aurora. "On'y don't speak loud—because I wouldn't 'ave you disturb Master George in the two pair back—or Master William in the front attic—or the butler in the little room be'ind the kitchen—I wouldn't 'ave you wake them up fer worlds. There's Master George, six foot seven if an inch, an' that broad 'e carn't go through a doorway unless 'e turns sideways; an' Master William, wot got the cup fer one o' them things at school; an' the butler, a sort of 'eavy-weight champion in 'is own part o' the country. If you take my tip, young man, you'll slip out the way you come, an' no bones broke."

"You won't kid me," said the voice. "There's on'y two ole gels that ever lived 'ere at all—an' they're away, an' you left. Go back w'ile yer safe; you can tell yer own story w'en they comes 'ome. I've got a revolver—an' I mean business; but I don't mean murder if I can 'elp it."

Aurora Gibbs had moved quietly across to where she knew the gas jet was situated; having in her hands the box of matches from the discarded candlestick, she swiftly struck a light and applied it to the jet, and at the same moment heard the quick movement of feet—saw a face near her own—and felt something cold pressed against her forehead.

"Oh, don't you mind me, young man," she said, with a little quick laugh. "Go on—shoot! Let the world see that all muvver's brag abaht me 'ead bein' stuffed wiv brains wasn't no kid. I'm waitin'—an' I've got a name that'll fill a line or two in the papers in the mornin'. ''Eroic conduck of a servant. Proposed monniment to 'er mem'ry. Subscriptions welcome, from a penny uppards!' An' you wiv a night-cap pulled on too far, an' yer 'ead not quite straight fer yer pains. Carn't yer git yer finger round the trigger?"

"I've told yer before I don't want to do yer no 'arm," said the man, hoarsely. "I'm noo at this game——"

"Tell me summink I don't know, fer a change," pleaded Aurora, pathetically. "If you'd bin one o' the real sort, young man, I'd

"'OH, DON'T YOU MIND ME, YOUNG MAN,' SHE SAID."

'ave bin lyin' a lovely corp at yer feet by this time. Now, shall I call Master George—or Master Samuel——"

"It was William 'alf a minute ago," broke in the man.

"Samuel William was the name they give 'im—an' 'e uses w'ichever 'e fancies at the momink," said Aurora, solemnly. "I've known 'im go to bed William an' git up Samuel—accordin' to the weather. Would you mind takin' that silly thing away from my 'ead? You ought to 'ave 'ad the sense to warm it a bit first."

"Will you speak or cry out?" demanded the man, fiercely.

"Not me," replied Aurora, with a laugh. "After all, it ain't my 'ouse, an' I suppose you know best what you're doing."

The man dropped his arm, and stood somewhat foolishly before her, watching her. He was a young man, rather shabbily dressed, but with a pleasant face, even if at the moment it was slightly distorted by fear. Seeing the incongruous figure so coolly facing him, he turned away, a little sheepishly, and lightly beat the barrel of the revolver he held into the palm of his other hand, and watched it while he spoke.

"You're a cool 'and, miss," he said. "I've 'eard they generally faint or scream—or summink o' that kind."

"'Tain't in my line," said the girl, with a shrug of the shoulders. "I leaves that to me betters, as the sayin' is. Now I suppose you'll pinch wot you want, an' then go out the way you come—eh?"

"Wot—wiv you lookin' on, an' you to swear to me in the dock, an' to swear to the things I took?" he demanded. "Likely—ain't it? That would be pritty much of a mug's game, wouldn't it?"

"Well, of course, if you'd wish me to say farewell an' leave you to it, say the word an' there you are," said Aurora, with a smile. "I don't know much about these things, or 'ow to be'ave; I'm wot you might call noo to it. You'll excuse my git-up, won't you? I was a bit 'urried."

"Look 'ere — wot's yer game?" The man came nearer, until his shoulder almost touched hers, and he was looking round furtively into her eyes. "You're a cool 'and, but you won't git over me, I tell yer. I suppose any uvver chap would 'ave 'it you a crack, an' done the job, an' bin out o' the place before you knew wot 'ad 'appened."

"You—knowin' 'ow to treat a lidy, no matter wot 'er station—thought better of it," she flashed back at him. "Put down that thing you don't know 'ow to 'andle, an' let's 'ave a good look at yer, an' see w'ether it's love or drink that's drove you to this 'ere. Sit down, I say, an' leave Master George an' Master Samuel William, an' the butler, an' all the rest of the large 'ousehold to play shut-eye in comfort. Speak low; I wouldn't 'ave you disturb 'em for the world."

The man laughed—hesitated for a moment—and then sat down. Aurora Gibbs sat down also, on a chair facing him, and drew the red petticoat demurely about her. "Cosy, I call it," she remarked, with a smile.

"Well—if burglin' is like this 'ere, give me the pantermime!" murmured the man, as he reached forward and laid the revolver on the faded table-cover on the round centre table. "Straight, now — there ain't no Master George—nor Samuel William—nor the rest of the menagerie—is there?"

"I give yer my word," began Miss Gibbs; and caught his eye. "I'm the famerly, if you want to know," she added, demurely. "As for you, you're a fraud; you 'aven't tried this game before?"

"I 'aven't, miss," he said, slowly. "But

w'en a man's out of a job, an' a pal says it's as easy as shellin' peas, an' on'y a mug of a servant gel left to look arter the place——"

"Quite the gentleman, your friend, I should say," broke in Aurora, frostily. "Wot's yer name, young man?"

"William Cooper."

"Got a trade, I imagine, in yer sober moments?"

"W'itesmith, miss," he replied.

"Sounds clean an' 'ealthy," said Aurora. "Married?"

"Thank goodness, no," replied William Cooper, with a little catch in his voice. "I tell yer straight, miss," he added, raising his head and looking earnestly at her, "I never meant to come down to this. But one glarss leads to anuvver, an' jobs ain't growin' on the railings, so to speak——"

"We 'ave to look fer our charnces in this world," commented Aurora.

"An' wot wiv one thing an' anuvver—well," he spread out his hands helplessly, "'ere I am!"

"Done you good to 'ave some nice gel to look after you an' keep you on the cinder track," said Aurora, coquettishly adjusting the antimacassar about her shoulders. "Bin the savin' of 'alf the men in the world, that 'as."

"I'm sure," replied Mr. Cooper, gloomily, with his eyes upon the carpet. Then, as he looked up sheepishly, in some wonder at the girl's silence, he became aware that she was standing in front of him and that she had the revolver within six inches of his forehead. He started back in some alarm and staggered to his feet, overturning the chair as he did so.

"Sorry for yerself, ain't yer?" snapped Aurora. "Like all you men—shoves yer nose in w'ere you ain't wanted, an' then wonders 'ow you're goin' to git out. 'Ow d'yer like burglin' now, young man?"

"You'd better put it down," said Mr. Cooper, nervously. "You don't unnerstand it, an' you'll 'urt yerself."

"It's not me that's goin' to be 'urt," remarked Aurora, with a smile. "It's a certain party that 'as dared" — Aurora Gibbs actually shivered with indignation—"dared to threaten a lady. Now, young man—w'ere will you 'ave it? Choose yer own spot; I'm in the world to give 'appiness to uvvers."

Suddenly, to her amazement, William Cooper dropped to his knees, lowered his hands, and raised his face miserably towards her. "I don't mind w'ere I 'ave it, miss," he said, in a forlorn fashion. "My name an' me character is gorn; shoot me somew'ere w'ere it's sudden, an' cover yerself wiv glory. Go on; it'll be a nice thing fer you, an' probably a rise in wages. I'm done for: I 'aven't got the 'eart fer this kind o' business."

"Git up!" ejaculated Aurora Gibbs, contemptuously. "There ain't nothink of the villain about you, that's clear; all the 'eroes I've ever seen on the stage stands up, an' bares their chests, an' cries on 'Eaven, an' all that kind of thing. I'm ashamed of yer."

"I suppose you won't mind me goin'?" suggested William Cooper, as he rose slowly from his knees.

"To rob somebody else?" asked Aurora.

"Not me; never no more!" he exclaimed. "This 'as bin a lesson to me; fust time ever

"'I DON'T MIND W'ERE I 'AVE IT, MISS,' HE SAID."

I went on me knees to a woman in me life."

"You've got lots to learn, young man," said Aurora, calmly. "But wot's this about goin', or did my ears deceive me?"

"I said somethink about it," murmured William Cooper. "You wouldn't 'ave me stop 'ere, would yer?"

"I ain't so sure," said Aurora, looking down coyly and giving a little twirl to the red petticoat. "Ain't so many men about—w'itesmiths or blacksmiths or burglars—that a gel can afford to chuck away charnces. Of course, it all depends upon character—but if you've slipped up fer the first time an' are properly sorry for yerself, it ain't fer me to chuck stones at yer, Mr. Cooper."

"I'm about as sorry fer meself as anybody could be," said William Cooper. "But I don't quite see your meanin', miss."

"W'en a lady's called up at goodness knows wot 'our, an' with goodness knows wot on, to wrestle with a desperit man with murder in 'is 'eart," said Aurora, primly, "well—it's naturally awkward fer the lady. If anyone was to come in at the present moment, fer instance——"

"Give yer my word I never thought o' that," said William Cooper, with deep contrition. "You see, miss, I ain't used to it; if I walked into anybody's bedroom, on the look-out for swag, I shouldn't know whether to take my 'at off or not — I shouldn't, indeed."

"I carn't 'elp your want of manners," retorted Aurora, sharply. "Goodness! Wot's that?"

She stopped, with one hand raised, listening. There had come a sound of wheels outside in the quiet road; then voices, in a sort of subdued murmur; then the unmistakable sound of a key turning in the lock. William Cooper, with a white face, made a snatch at the revolver, and got it; Aurora stood stock-still, waiting.

"They've come back!" she whispered. "An' I forgot that blessed chain on the door!"

There was no chance of escape. The Misses Burningham were already in the house, and were making for the door of the room. William Cooper — amateur at the game that he was — stood fumbling with the revolver behind his back, and wondering what he should do. And then, as the elderly ladies entered the room with grim smiles of triumph at their discovery, Aurora quite suddenly made up her mind and the mind of William Cooper at the same time.

"I feared this," said Miss Dorcas. "We had our suspicions—my sister and I—and we returned by a very late train, and took a cab from the station. What do we find?"

"I ain't good at riddles, mum," retorted Aurora. "Ask me summink easier."

"We find the door unfastened — lights burning—and you in an outrageous costume, talking to a man. I want an explanation, Emma; who is this man?"

William Cooper cast an appealing glance at the girl; she caught it, and looked for a moment at him with a mischievous gleam in her eyes. For she knew that to declare who he was would be his undoing in a moment; while, on the other hand, it must be her undoing to declare anything else. Yet, to his amazement as well as his admiration, she chose the latter course.

"This, mum, is a friend," said Aurora, extending one hand by way of introduction; "Mr. William Cooper by name, and w'itesmith by occupation. 'Ighly respectable, and 'as wot you might call w'itesmithed for the very first families."

"Why is he here?" demanded Miss Hannah Burningham.

"'Tain't fer me to say," said Aurora, with a giggle. "W'en a gel's been as much sought after, in a manner of speakin', as I 'ave, I suppose you must come to believe there's summink in yer face that brings 'em round yer. Speak up, William; there's no cause for 'anging back."

"I called 'ere to-night," said William Cooper, with a very red face—"I called 'ere with the idea in me mind——"

"Say wot you said jest now, William," urged Miss Gibbs. "Show 'em the revolver wot you was goin' to blow yer brains out wiv, if I wouldn't listen to yer prayers. 'E's got it be'ind 'im, mum," she added.

Very slowly Mr. William Cooper brought forth the revolver; the two ladies screamed in concert, and clung to each other. Aurora, with another little giggle, took up her tale again.

"Bin 'anging about me, off an' on, fer years," she said. "As fer me encouragin' 'im, or even lettin' 'im 'ope in the least—I'm the larst to do that. But w'en a man opens a winder in wot you might call the dead of night, an' sits on the stairs, and sighs yer name, you've got to do summink. An' oh, mum, if you on'y knew the struggle we've 'ad! 'Let me die!' 'e says; 'let me die w'ile them warm kisses is on me face!' 'Never!' I says; 'I am not worth it.'"

"I carn't exactly remember 'aving used

them words," murmured Mr. Cooper, in a dazed fashion.

"You wasn't in a condition to remember anythink," Aurora reminded him, sharply. "It's well you arrived, mum," she added,

"'E'S GOT IT BEIND 'IM, MUM,' SHE ADDED.

turning to Miss Dorcas, "or the 'ouse might 'ave bin a mask of blood!"

"It is certainly well that we have arrived," said Miss Dorcas. "Whether we have prevented a tragedy or not, I don't know; but you have disobeyed our strict injunction, as regards anyone entering the house. You leave to-morrow morning, and we shall, of course, pay your wages in lieu of the usual warning. Now, show this man out."

Mr. William Cooper slid the revolver into his pocket, and sheepishly walked out. Aurora, after one glance which swept over the two old ladies, tossed her head and followed him, closing the door behind her. As she opened the door leading into the street, William Cooper passed out, and then turned and faced her.

"Wot's a man to say to you?" he asked, in a whisper. "You've got me off—an' lorst yer place."

"Plenty of places," retorted Aurora. "Anyway, I shall be free—to-morrer night."

She thoughtfully pleated up the edge of the antimacassar in her fingers, and looked at it.

"I shall look fer a job in the mornin'," said Mr. Cooper, with deep earnestness, "an' I shall chuck this 'ere"—he slapped the pocket which held the revolver—"I shall chuck this 'ere into the river."

"Good boy!" whispered Aurora Gibbs. "No more silly nonsense, mind."

"If I'd on'y got somebody that minded w'ether I went straight, or w'ether I didn't——"

"I shouldn't be a bit surprised," said Aurora, with a thoughtful glance at the stars—"I reelly shouldn't wonder if I wasn't takin' a turn on the edge of the Common to-morrer night, about nine, fer the sake of the air."

"Might I venture, miss, to come an' tell yer about that job?" inquired William Cooper, eagerly.

"I shall want to know not on'y about the job, but about the wages," said Aurora, calmly. "There won't be any question about it; you'll git it fast enough."

"I shall, miss," said William Cooper, with something suspiciously like a sob in his throat. "An' if I might on'y——" He pulled off his cap and moved a little nearer towards her.

Aurora drew back quickly. "That's one of the things we'll leave till to-morrer, so as to see 'ow you've be'aved. So long, William!"

She closed the door and carefully adjusted the chain, gathered the red petticoat delicately about her, and went nimbly upstairs to her room.

Eccentricities of Weddings.

By Thornton Hall, M.A.

READ where you will in the annals of Cupid, and you will scarcely find a page which does not contain some striking and often startling revelation of the little sprite's resourcefulness, defiance of convention, and triumph over difficulties which would seem insurmountable.

Never, for instance, was there a less likely candidate for the altar than Mr. W. Hamilton, the "noted Scottish bachelor,' who, in addition to being almost preternaturally ugly, was thus described by a contemporary: "His legs were drawn up to his ears, his arms were twisted backwards, and almost every member was out of joint." And yet this deformed and ill-favoured specimen of humanity, after he had passed his eightieth birthday, won the hand, if not the heart, of a beautiful girl of twenty summers, and was carried shoulder-high into church to wed her. Nor need a lady lack a husband because she is wanting in limbs, as was proved when "Princess Anetta," a Swiss girl of eighteen, who came into the world without either arms or legs, was wooed and wedded at Geneva by Joseph Starker, a handsome young German, a few months ago.

That Cupid is equally indifferent to chronology when he is intent on linking lives has been proved on occasions almost innumerable. Many a year ago a remarkable wedding was celebrated in Berkshire, in which the bridegroom had reached the mature age of eighty-five, while his bride was but two years his junior. Each of the bridesmaids, who were all spinsters, had passed her seventieth birthday; six granddaughters of the groom strewed flowers on the bridal path to the altar; and four of the bride's grandsons chanted a wedding lay composed for the happy occasion.

About two years ago Mr. Andrew Nellis, aged ninety-two, and Mrs. Elizabeth Cassel, a blooming bride of eighty-three, stood together before the altar at Howard City, Michigan,

"THE BRIDEGROOM HAD REACHED THE MATURE AGE OF EIGHTY-FIVE, WHILE HIS BRIDE WAS BUT TWO YEARS HIS JUNIOR."

while forty-three of their great-grandchildren attended the nuptials. Still more recently Mrs. Harvey, a bride of ninety-six summers, became the wife, at Penzance, of Mr. Vincent, a mere boy of eighty-six; and at the moment of writing comes the report of an American wedding, in which husband and wife number two hundred and one years between them, each having survived a century of life.

But Cupid is even more in his element when he is linking December with May, or with even a less advanced month. Thus we read with little surprise (it is no use being surprised at any of Cupid's vagaries) of a blind Berkshire woman of ninety being led to the altar by her ploughboy, *ætat* twenty; of a gentleman of Worcester, far gone in his ninth decade, wedding a girl of eighteen; of a maid of sixteen linking her life with that of a gentleman of ninety-four, "who had fifty thousand pounds"; and of "a soldier of ninety-five, who had served in King William's wars and had a ball in his nose," placing a wedding-ring on the finger of a child of fifteen.

Robert Lawrence, of Guisborough, took to himself a fourth spouse when he was within a few months of his ninetieth birthday, and quite recently the Rev. Robert Martin, a Baptist minister of eighty-three, was married to Nurse Roberts, a lady fifty-one years his junior; while Sir James Langrishe, Bart., in his eighty-third year, won a bride in Miss Algitha Gooch, a lady in the forties.

Equally remarkable are the conditions under which presumably happy couples have been made one, conditions so varied and ingenious that it would require a very clever man to discover an addition to them.

Thus, a few years ago, Charlotte Wiberg and Arthur Standrassy were united in a den of lions at the Boston Zoological Gardens, the ceremony being punctuated by the growls of the lions and the cracking of the trainer's whip. The bride, it is gratifying to learn, "was the only cool and perfectly composed creature present." In striking contrast to these sensational nuptials was the wedding of Miss Violet Mascotte, the leading member of a burlesque company touring in the United States, to Mr. Wilfred Chasemore, her manager. The ceremony took place on the stage of the Grand Opera House, Newark, during the last act of "Sindbad; or, the Lass that Loved a Sailor," the ladies of the chorus officiating as bridesmaids, while the male members of the company acted as best men. Not long before a similar ceremony had been witnessed on the stage of the Opera House at Atlanta, Georgia, in which the bridegroom, Hiram Lester, was a centenarian, whilst his bride would never see her eighty-first birthday again. The Opera House was crowded to suffocation by curious spectators, who gladly paid twenty-five cents each for the privilege of being present.

Even less conventional was the recent marriage of a young Cleveland couple, who were united in a shop window in an environment of "elegant drawing-room suites, rolls of carpet, fenders, and sideboards," and in the presence of a vast crowd of interested spectators. A somewhat similar spectacle was also seen, a short time ago, in London, when Mr. George Keen and his bride, who had been married at a neighbouring church, enjoyed their wedding breakfast in the window of an Essex Road (Islington) furniture shop, while a crowd, said to number over twenty thousand, looked on at the novel feast.

At St. Louis, Miss Grace C. Mullery and Mr. Nelson Shannon were married on a public merry-go-round to the strains of "The Wearing of the Green." At Winsted, Connecticut, five hundred people paid two shillings each to witness the nuptials of George Bagha and Elizabeth Hallock. The ceremony was preceded by a spirited debate on matrimony between three married and three unmarried people, and as the bridal couple entered the spectators sang, "Oh! I'm glad I'm ready, with the wedding-garments on."

Mr. Abbott Lawrence, a wealthy mine-owner, and Miss Georgia Payne, of Kansas City, were made one in Delmonico's restaurant, New York. "The minister," we learn, "speedily performed the ceremony, which delayed the roast about three minutes. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence then departed on their honeymoon, leaving the clergyman and guests to finish their dinner." More exciting was the matrimonial venture of a young Australian named Brooks, who conceived the original idea of being married on horseback. Unfortunately, his steed, probably resenting the innovation, became restive, bolted at the critical point of the ceremony, and was not satisfied until he had cooled the bridegroom's ardour by depositing him in a neighbouring canal.

A somewhat similar misadventure marred one of the motor-car marriages which have become so fashionable in America recently. Near Atlanta a chauffeur, whose attention was distracted by the wedding ceremonial,

suddenly cannoned against a tree-stump, with the result that the clergyman, who was saying "Bless you, my children," and the young couple were precipitated into a ditch, with disastrous results to the bride's attire.

Not long ago a bridal party arrived at the church of St. Nicholas, Strood, to find that the sacred building was on fire. The bells and roof had collapsed, the tower was completely gutted, and the firemen were still at work on the smouldering ruins; but in spite of these discouraging conditions the nuptial knot was happily tied, to the music of the swishing hose and in an environment of flying sparks. A few days after West Orchard Congregational Church, Coventry, had been almost destroyed by fire a wedding was celebrated in one of the remaining aisles, amid the *débris* of the fire and with an uninterrupted view from the floor of the building to the sky.

"THE CLERGYMAN AND THE YOUNG COUPLE WERE PRECIPITATED INTO A DITCH."

In these advanced days even an infectious disease is powerless to check men or maids on matrimony bent. A young American lady was recently struck down by diphtheria on the eve of her bridal day, and as the patient had to be isolated for fear of infection a postponement of the happy event seemed inevitable. The bridegroom, however, who was a man of resource as well as determination, procured a clergyman and two phonographs. On one of them the parson's questions and his own answers were recorded. The cylinders were then transferred, and the two machines sent to the quarantined bride. When they were set in motion she answered the questions propounded by one machine, speaking into the mouthpiece of the other, and the ceremony was complete.

Even tragedy has at times had no fears for Hymen. On the very morning on which Dr. Rizal, of Manila, was shot as a rebel by the Spaniards, he was married to the lady who loved him. A few minutes later the newly-made bride accompanied her husband to the place of execution, and remained near him until the fatal shots were fired which made her, who had been maid and wife within the previous hour, a widow. Charles B. Hudson and Florence Edwards were recently married at Providence, Rhode Island, beside the coffin which contained the body of the bridegroom's mother, whose last wish had been that they should be made one in the presence of her remains.

The days of the "smock marriage," in which the bride appeared at the altar dressed in a white sheet or a chemise, are happily gone; but bridal attire still takes occasionally a form almost as unconventional. When a Siberian millionaire died not long ago he left his son an enormous fortune on condition that if he ever took a wife he should go through the ceremony in sackcloth and ashes. When, a little later, the son married a beautiful and richly-attired bride, he wore a sackcloth apron and had his head covered with ashes in obedience to his father's strange instruction.

In Pennsylvania, a few years ago, a bridegroom in pyjamas was united to a bride attired in a dressing-gown; at a Dorsetshire wedding a man named Ralle was clothed from head to foot in bearskin, while his bride wore a necklace of bears' teeth over her sealskin jacket; and another eccentric bridegroom, dressed in the armour of a

"AT A DORSETSHIRE WEDDING A MAN NAMED RALLE WAS CLOTHED FROM HEAD TO FOOT IN BEARSKIN."

mediæval knight, led to the altar a lady wearing the ruff and farthingale of Elizabeth's day. At the wedding of Mr. Raymond Dittmars, Curator of the New York Zoological Gardens, the skins of cobras, pythons, rattlesnakes, and other reptiles were used with the floral decorations. The ceremony took place in a veritable bower of snakeskins, and the bride wore round her neck a living pet gopher-snake, seven feet long.

How love can triumph over physical disabilities was heroically proved the other day, when Mr. A. Swan, an American civil engineer, who had received compound fractures of both legs a week or two before the day appointed for his wedding, was married at the Flower Hospital, New York, with half his body encased in plaster of Paris. In Paris, a young lady who was about to undergo an operation which it was feared would end fatally insisted on being first married to her *fiancé*, and was taken from the altar straight to the operating-room; and a similar wedding was celebrated in a Jersey hospital on the eve of a serious operation which, in this case, the bridegroom had to undergo.

At the wedding, a few months ago, of Mr. Basil Howard Hankey and Miss Goodden, of Nether Compton, Dorset, the bridegroom, who had met with an accident an hour before the ceremony, was carried into the church on a chair; and in New York, Charles Trocce was recently married to Julie Bernadi, after fighting a duel with a rival for her affections, and while lying on the operating-table ready for surgical treatment which his wounds made necessary.

Even jails have been the scene of many a romantic union. A few months ago André Negro, while lying under sentence of death in a Paris prison, sought and obtained permission to be married to Eugénie Bosbocq, the woman who was suspected of handing him the knife with which he tried to kill a warder; and a young Englishman, while awaiting his trial in an Ohio prison on a charge of embezzlement, was married in the jailer's room to a young lady to whom he was engaged, and who pleaded to be allowed in this way to share his disgrace.

When Baron Ferdinand Dienersperg, a Hungarian nobleman, lay on his death-bed a short time ago he was wedded to Mathilde Epstein, a beautiful young Jewess with whom he had fallen in love some years earlier, but whom he had been unable to make his wife through the opposition of their respective families to the match. The ceremony was concluded at half-past one in the morning; an hour later the Baron drew his last breath, leaving a considerable fortune to his widow. An aged pensioner of the City of London Police, when he saw death near, made a wife of a young girl who had nursed him devotedly through a long illness, so that she might, as his widow, enjoy a pension of twenty-five pounds a year for life as a reward for her ministrations.

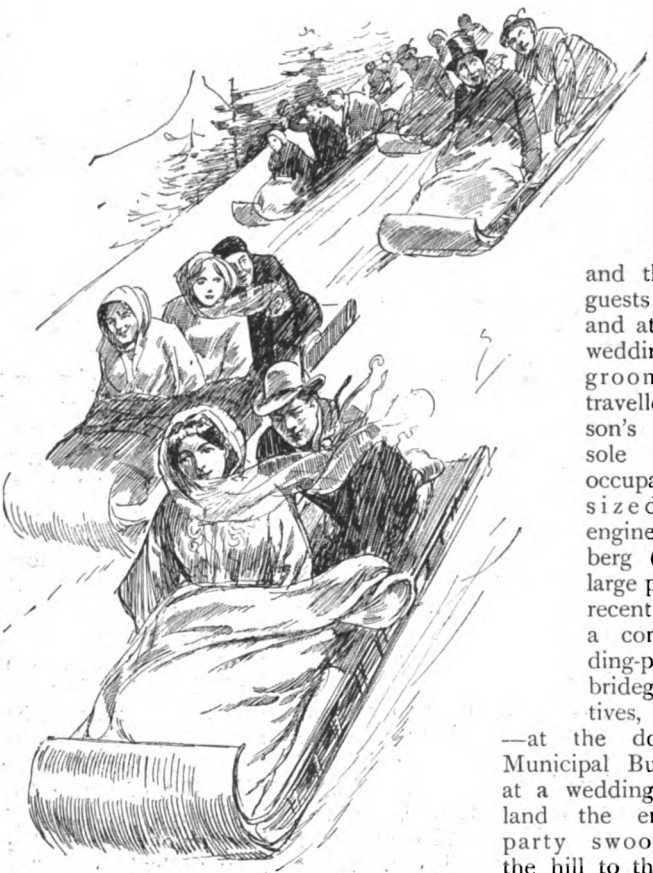
From these somewhat grim nuptials it is a relief to turn to a novel and picturesque wedding which took place at Dulverton, and at which "the bride was escorted to church by the Devon and Somerset staghounds, while the Taunton Vale staghounds accompanied the party back to Coombe." When Miss Pinckney, a keen follower of the Tedworth foxhounds, was married at Durnford, South Wilts, "the pack ran through the churchyard in full cry twice during the ceremony; and on the return of the party to the bride's house the fox appeared in the

neighbourhood, was killed, and the brush presented to the bride."

A remarkable marriage took place some months ago at the church of Ste. Marie des Batignolles, Paris, when two twin brothers named Charnteau led two twin sisters to the altar, and were attended by best men who were also twins and cousins of the bridegrooms. When Mr. William Mercer, of Huntingdon, Virginia, took to himself a fifth wife, it was stated that her four predecessors had been her sisters in exact order of seniority, and that each of them had presented her husband with two children. Quite recently a marriage took place in Tarrytown, New York, between a man weighing thirty-five stone ten pounds and a woman who scaled seven stone two pounds; while the longest couple on record were Captain Martin Bates, "the Kentucky giant," and Miss Anna Swan, who together represented within two inches of sixteen feet of happy humanity.

If thirteen is indeed a harbinger of ill-luck, Mr. and Mrs. George Marble, of Worcester (Mass.), who were united in wedlock about a year ago, ought to be the most unenviable couple; for it was on the thirteenth of the month that they first met, they became engaged on the thirteenth, and they made known their engagement to their parents on the thirteenth. The first time the lady dined at the bridegroom's home was on a thirteenth, and there were thirteen at the table. The numbers on the houses of the two families total one hundred and thirty. They were married at six and had a reception at seven, giving another thirteen. There were thirteen in the bridal party, besides the couple themselves. The maid-of-honour carried thirteen roses, and each of the bridesmaids thirteen carnations.

Almost as much ingenuity is displayed in the method of reaching the altar as in the marriages themselves, for there is no means of locomotion, from stilts and toboggans to traction-engines and funeral-coaches, that has not already been exploited. One Easter Sunday, a few years ago, a wedding-party drove up to St. Mark's Church, Birmingham, in mourning-coaches, the only evidence of festivity being the display of white rosettes worn by the horses. At East Peckham, a Kentish village, a traction-engine, followed by several trucks, lavishly decorated with flags, flowers, and evergreens, conveyed a bridegroom, his bride, and the wedding-guests to church; and at a Cheshire wedding the bridegroom's father travelled to his son's nuptials the sole and proud occupant of a full-sized traction-engine. At Koekelberg (Belgium) a large pantechnicon recently deposited a complete wedding-party—bride, bridegroom, relatives, and friends—at the door of the Municipal Buildings, and at a wedding in Switzerland the entire bridal party swooped down the hill to the church in toboggans.



"THE ENTIRE BRIDAL PARTY SWOOPED DOWN THE HILL TO THE CHURCH IN TOBOGGANS."

The Enchanted Castle.

By E. NESBIT.

A Story
for
Children.

CHAPTER XII.

IT would be interesting, no doubt, to describe the feelings of Lord Yalding as he followed Mabel and Jimmy through his ancestral halls, but I have no means of knowing at all what he felt. Yet one must suppose that he felt something; bewilderment, perhaps, mixed with a faint wonder, and a desire to pinch himself to see if he were dreaming. Or he may have pondered the rival questions: "Am I mad?" "Are they mad?" without being at all able to decide which he ought to try to answer, let alone deciding what, in either case, the answer ought to be. You see, the children did seem to believe in the odd stories they told, and the wish *had* come true, and the ghost *had* appeared. He must have thought —— But all this is vain; I don't really know what he thought, any more than you do.

Nor can I give you any clue to the thoughts and feelings of mademoiselle. I only know that she was very happy, but anyone would have known that if they had seen her face. Perhaps this is as good a moment as any to explain that when her guardian had put her in a convent, so that she should not sacrifice her fortune by marrying a poor lord, the guardian had secured that fortune (to himself) by going off with it to South America. Then, having no money left, mademoiselle had to work for it. So she went out as a governess, and took the situation she did take because it was near Lord Yalding's home. She wanted to see him, even though she thought he had forsaken her and did not love her any more. And now she had seen him. I dare say she thought about some of these things as she went through his house, her hand held in his. But, of course, I can't be sure.

Jimmy's thoughts, of course, I can read like any old book. He thought, "Now he'll *have* to believe me." That Lord Yalding should believe him had become, quite unreasonably, the most important thing in the world to Jimmy. He wished that Gerald and Kathleen were there to share his triumph,

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but they were helping Mabel's aunt to cover up the grand furniture, and so were out of what followed. Not that they missed much, for when Mabel proudly said, "Now you'll see," and the others came close round her in the little panelled room, there was a pause—and then—nothing happened at all!

"There's a secret spring here somewhere," said Mabel, fumbling with fingers that had suddenly grown hot and damp.

"Where?" said Lord Yalding.

"*Here*," said Mabel, impatiently; "only I can't find it."

And she couldn't. She found the spring of the secret panel under the window all right, but that seemed, to everyone, dull compared with the jewels that everyone had pictured and two at least had seen. But the spring that made the oak panelling slide away and displayed jewels plainly to any eye worth a King's ransom — this could not be found. More—it was simply not there. There could be no doubt of that. Every inch of the panelling was felt by careful fingers. The earnest protests of Mabel and Jimmy died away, presently, in a silence made painful by the hotness of one's ears, the discomfort of not liking to meet anyone's eyes, and the resentful feeling that the spring was not behaving in at all a sportsmanlike way, and that, in a word, this was not cricket.

"You see!" said Lord Yalding, severely. "Now you've had your joke, if you call it a joke—and I've had enough of the whole silly business. Give me the ring—it's mine, I suppose, since you say you found it somewhere here—and don't let's hear another word about all this rubbish of magic and enchantment."

"Gerald's got the ring," said Mabel, miserably.

"Then go and fetch him," said Lord Yalding—"both of you." The melancholy pair retired, and Lord Yalding spent the time of their absence in explaining to mademoiselle how very unimportant jewels were compared with other things.

The four children came back together.

"We've had enough of this ring business," said Lord Yalding. "Give it to me, and we'll say no more about it."

"I—I can't get it off," said Gerald; "it—it always did have a will of its own."

"I'll soon get it off," said Lord Yalding. But he didn't. "We'll try soap," he said, firmly. Four out of his five hearers knew just exactly how much use soap would be.

"They won't believe about the jewels," wailed Mabel, suddenly dissolved in tears, "and I can't find the spring. I've felt all over—we all have—it was just here, and——"

Her fingers felt it as she spoke; and as she ceased to speak the carved panels slid away, and the blue velvet shelves laden with jewels were disclosed to the unbelieving eyes of Lord Yalding and the lady who was to be his wife.

"Jove!" said Lord Yalding.

"Miséricorde," said the lady.

"But why *now?*" gasped Mabel; "why not before?"

"I expect it's magic," said Gerald; "there's no real spring here, and it couldn't act because the ring wasn't here. You know Phœbus told us the ring was the heart of all the magic."

"Shut it up and take the ring away, and see."

They did, and Gerald was (as usual, he himself pointed out) proved to be right. When the ring was away there was no spring. When the ring was in the room there (as Mabel urged) was the spring all right enough.

"So you see," said Mabel to Lord Yalding.

"I see that the spring's very artfully concealed," said that dense peer. "I think it was very clever indeed of you to find it. And if those jewels are real——"

"Of course they're real," said Mabel, indignantly.

"Well, anyway," said Lord Yalding, "thank you all very much. I think it's clearing up. I'll send the wagonette home with you after lunch. And, if you don't mind, I'll have the ring."

Half an hour of soap and water produced no effect whatever, except to make the finger of Gerald very red and very sore. Then Lord Yalding said something very impatient indeed, and then Gerald suddenly became angry and said: "Well, I'm sure I wish it *would* come off," and, of course, instantly, "slick as butter," as he later pointed out, off it came.

"Thank you," said Lord Yalding.

"And I believe now he thinks I kept it on on purpose," said Gerald afterwards when, at ease on the leads at home, they talked the whole thing out over a tin of preserved pine-apple and a bottle of ginger-beer apiece. "There's no pleasing some people. He wasn't in such a fiery hurry to order that wagonette after he found that mademoiselle meant to go when we did. But I liked him better when he was a humble bailiff. Take him for all in all, he does not look as if we should like him again."

"He doesn't know what's the matter with him," said Kathleen, leaning back against the tiled roof; "it's really the magic—it's

like sickening with measles. Don't you remember how cross Mabel was at first about the invisibleness?"

"Rather," said Jimmy.

"It's partly that," said Gerald, trying to be fair, "and partly it's the being in love. It always makes people like idiots—a chap at school told me so. His sister was like that. Quite rotten, you know. And she used to be quite a decent sort before she was engaged."

At tea and at supper mademoiselle was radiant—as attractive as a lady on a Christmas card, as merry as a marmoset, and as kind as you would always be yourself if you could take the trouble.

At breakfast, an equal radiance, kindness, attraction, merriment. Then Lord Yalding came to see her. The meeting took place in the drawing-room—the children with deep discreetness remained shut in the school-room till Gerald, going up to his room for a pencil, surprised Eliza with her ear glued to the drawing-room keyhole.

After that Gerald sat on the top stair with a book. He could not hear any of the conversation in the drawing-room, but he could command a view of the door, and in this way be certain that no one else heard any of it. Thus it was that when the drawing-room door opened Gerald was in a position to see Lord Yalding come out. "Our young hero," as he said later, "coughed with infinite tact to show that he was there," but Lord Yalding did not seem to notice.

He walked in a blind sort of way to the hat-stand, fumbled clumsily with the umbrellas and mackintoshes, found his straw hat and looked at it gloomily, crammed it on his head, and went out, banging the door behind him in the most reckless way.

He left the drawing-room door open, and Gerald, though he had purposely put himself in a position where one could hear nothing from the drawing-room when the door was shut, could hear something quite plainly now that the door was open. That something, he noticed with deep distress and disgust, was the sound of sobs and sniffs. Mademoiselle was quite certainly crying.

"Jiminy," he remarked to himself, "they haven't lost much time! Fancy their beginning to quarrel *already!* I hope I'll never have to be anybody's lover."

But this was no time to brood on the terrors of his own future. Eliza might at any time appear. She would not for a moment hesitate to go through that open door and push herself into the very secret, sacred heart of mademoiselle's grief. It seemed to Gerald better that he should be the one to do this. So he went softly down the worn green Dutch carpet of the stairs and into the drawing-room, shutting the door softly and securely behind him.

"HE WAS HOLDING HER HAND ALMOST AS AFFECTIONATELY AS IF SHE HAD BEEN HIS MOTHER WITH A HEADACHE."

"It is all over," mademoiselle was saying, her face buried in the beady arum lilies on a red ground worked for a cushion cover by a former pupil; "he will not marry me!"

Do not ask me how Gerald had gained the lady's confidence. He had, as I think I said almost at the beginning, very pretty ways with grown-ups when he chose. Anyway, he was holding her hand almost as affectionately as if she had been his mother with a headache, and saying "Don't," and "Don't cry," and "It'll be all right, you see if it isn't," in the most comforting way you can imagine, varying the treatment with gentle thumps on the back and entreaties to her to tell him all about it.

This wasn't mere curiosity, as you might think. The entreaties were prompted by Gerald's growing certainty that whatever was the matter was somehow the fault of that ring. And in this Gerald was ("once more," as he told himself) right.

The tale, as told by mademoiselle, was certainly an unusual one. Lord Yalding, last night after dinner, had walked in the park "to think of——"

"Yes, I know," said Gerald; "and he had the ring on. And he saw——"

"He saw the monuments become alive," sobbed mademoiselle; "his brain was troubled by the ridiculous accounts of fairies that you tell him. He sees Apollon and Aphrodité alive on their marble. He remembers him of your story. He wish himself a statue. Then he becomes mad—imagines to himself that your story of the island is true, plunges in the lake, swims among the beasts of the Ark of Noé, feeds with gods on an island. At dawn the madness becomes less. He think the Panthéon vanish. But him, no; he thinks himself statue, hiding from gardeners in his garden till nine less a quarter. Then he thinks to wish himself no more a statue, and perceives that he is flesh and blood. A bad dream, but he has lost the head with the tales you tell. He say it is no dream, but he is fool, mad—how you say? And a mad must not marry. There is no hope. I am at despair. And the life is vain."

"There *is*," said Gerald, earnestly; "I assure you there is—hope, I mean. And life's as right as rain, really. And there's nothing to despair about. He's *not* mad, and it's *not* a dream. It's magic—it really and truly is."

"The magic exists not," mademoiselle moaned. "It is that he is mad. It is the joy to re-see me after so many days. Oh, la, la, la, la, la!"

"Did he talk to the gods?" Gerald asked, gently.

"It is there the most mad of all his ideas. He say that Mercure give him rendezvous at some temple to-morrow when the moon raise herself."

"Right," cried Gerald, "right-O! Dear, nice, kind, pretty mademoiselle—don't be a silly little duffer"; he lost himself for a moment among the consoling endearments he was accustomed to offer Kathleen in moments of grief and emotion, but hastily added: "I mean do not be a lady who weeps causelessly. To-morrow he will go to that temple. I will go. Thou shalt go—he will go. We will go—you will go—let 'em all go! And, you see—it's going to be absolutely all right. He'll see he isn't mad, and you'll understand all about everything. Take my handkerchief, it's quite a clean one as it happens. I haven't even unfolded it. Oh, do stop crying, there's a dear, darling, long-lost lover."

This flood of eloquence was not without effect. She took his handkerchief, sobbed, half smiled, dabbed at her eyes, and said:—

"Oh, naughty; is it some trick you play him, like the ghost?"

"I can't explain," said Gerald, "but I give you my word of honour—you know what an Englishman's word of honour is, don't you, even if you *are* French?—that everything is going to be exactly what you wish. I've never told you a lie. Believe me!"

"It is curious," said she, drying her eyes, "but I do." And once again, so suddenly that he could not have resisted—she kissed him. I think, however, that in this her hour of sorrow he would have thought it mean to resist.

"It pleases her and it doesn't hurt me—much," would have been his thought.

And now it is near moonrise. The French governess, half doubting, half hoping, but wholly longing to be near Lord Yalding, even if he be as mad as a March hare, and the four children—they have collected Mabel by an urgent letter-card posted the day before—are going over the dewy grass. The moon has not yet risen, but her light is in the sky, mixed with the pink and purple of the sunset. The west is heavy with ink-clouds and rich colour, but the east, where the moon rises, is clear as a rock-pool.

They go across the lawn and through the beech wood and come at last, through a tangle of underwood and bramble, to a little level tableland that rises out of the flat hill-top—one tableland out of another. Here is the ring of vast rugged stones—one pierced with a curious round hole, worn smooth at its edges. In the middle of the circle is a great flat stone, alone, desolate, full of meaning—a stone that is covered thick with the memory of old faiths and creeds long since forgotten. Something dark moves in the circle. The French girl breaks from the children, goes to it, clings to its arm. It is Lord Yalding, and he is telling her to go.

"Never of the life!" she cries. "If you are mad I am mad too, for I believe the tale these children tell. And I am here to be

"HERE IS THE RING OF VAST RUGGED STONES—ONE PIERCED WITH A CURIOUS ROUND HOLE."

with thee and see with thee—whatever the rising moon shall show us."

The children, holding hands by the flat stone, more moved by the magic in the girl's voice than by any magic of enchanted rings, listen, trying not to listen.

"Are you not afraid?" Lord Yalding is saying.

"Afraid? With you?" she laughs. He puts his arm round her. The children hear her sigh.

"Are you afraid," he says, "my darling?"

Gerald goes across the wide turf ring expressly to say:—

"You can't be afraid if you are wearing the ring. And I'm sorry, but we can hear every word you say."

She laughs again. "It makes nothing," she says; "you know already if we love each other."

Then he puts the ring on her finger, and they stand together; the white of his flannel coat-sleeve marks no line on the white of her dress. They stand as though cut out of one block of marble.

Then a faint greyness touches the top of that round hole, creeps up the side. Then the hole is a disc of light—a moonbeam strikes straight through it across the grey-green of the circle that the stones mark—and as the moon rises the moonbeam slants downward. The children have drawn back till they stand close to the lovers. The moonbeam slants more and more; now it touches the far end of the stone, now it draws nearer and nearer to the middle of it, now at last it touches the very heart and centre of that central stone. And then it is as though a spring were touched—a fountain of light released. Everything changes. Or, rather, everything is revealed. There are no more secrets. The plan of the world seems plain: like an easy sum that one writes in big figures on a child's slate. One wonders how one can ever have wondered about anything. Space is not. Every place that one has seen or dreamed of is here. Time is not. Into this instant is crowded all that one has ever done, or dreamed of doing. It is a moment, and it is eternity. It is the centre of the universe, and it is the universe itself. The eternal light rests on and illuminates the eternal heart of things.

None of the six human beings who saw that moon rising were ever able to think about it as having anything to do with time. Only for one instant could that moonray have rested full on the centre of that stone. And yet there was time for many happenings.

From that height one could see far out over the quiet park and the sleeping gardens, and through the grey-green of them shapes moved, approaching.

The great beasts came first—strange forms that were when the world was new, gigantic lizards with wings—dragons they lived as, in men's memories, mammoths, strange vast birds; they crawled up the hill and ranged themselves outside the circle. Then—not from the garden, but from very far away, came the stone gods of Egypt and Assyria—bull-bodied, bird-winged, hawk-headed, cat-headed, all in stone, and all alive and alert; strange grotesque figures from the towers of cathedrals—figures of angels with folded wings, figures of beasts with wings widespread: sphinxes—uncouth idols from Southern palm-fringed islands; and, last of all, the beautiful marble shapes of the gods and goddesses who had held their festival on the lake-island, and bidden Lord Yalding and the children to this meeting.

Not a word was spoken. Each stone shape came gladly and quietly into the circle of light and understanding, as children, tired with a long ramble, creep quietly through the open door into the firelit welcome of home.

The children had thought to ask many questions. And it had been promised that the questions should be answered. Yet now no one spoke a word. Because all had come into the circle of the real magic, where all things are understood without speech.

Afterwards none of them could ever remember at all what had happened. But they never forgot that they had been somewhere where everything was easy and beautiful. And people who can remember even that much are never quite the same again. And when they came to talk of it next day they found that to each some little part of that night's great enlightenment was left.

All the stone creatures drew closer round the stone. The light, where the moonbeam struck the stone, seemed to break away in spray, such as water makes when it falls from a height. All the crowd was bathed in whiteness. A deep hush lay over the vast assembly.

Then a wave of intention swept over the mighty crowd. All the faces—bird, beast, Greek statue, Babylonian monster, human child, and human lover—turned upward; the radiant light illumined them, and one word broke from all.

"The light!" they cried, and the sound of their voice was like the sound of a great wave. "The light—the light——"

And then the light was not any more, and, soft as floating thistledown, sleep was laid on the eyes of all but the immortals.

The grass was chill and dewy and the clouds had veiled the moon.

The lovers and the children were standing together, all clinging close, not for fear, but for love.

"I want," said the French girl, softly, "to go to the cave in the island."

Very quietly, through the gentle brooding night, they went down to the boat-house, loosed the clanking chain, and dipped oars among the drowned stars and lilies. They came to the island and found the steps.

"I brought candles," said Gerald, "in case."

So, lighted by Gerald's candles, they went down into the Hall of Psyche; and there glowed the light spread from her statue, and all was as the children had seen it before.

"The ring," said Lord Yalding.

"The ring," said his lover, "is the magic ring given long ago to a mortal, and it is what you say it is. It was given to your ancestor by a lady of my house, that he might build her a garden and a house like her own palace and garden in her own land. So that this place is built partly by his love and partly by that magic. She never lived to see it. That was the price of the magic."

It must have been English that she spoke, for otherwise how could the children have understood her? Yet the words were not like mademoiselle's way of speaking.

"Except from children," her voice went on, "the ring exacts a payment. You paid for me, when I came by your wish, by this terror of madness that you have since known. Only one wish is free."

"And that wish is?"

"The last," she said. "Shall I wish?"

"Yes—wish," they said, all of them.

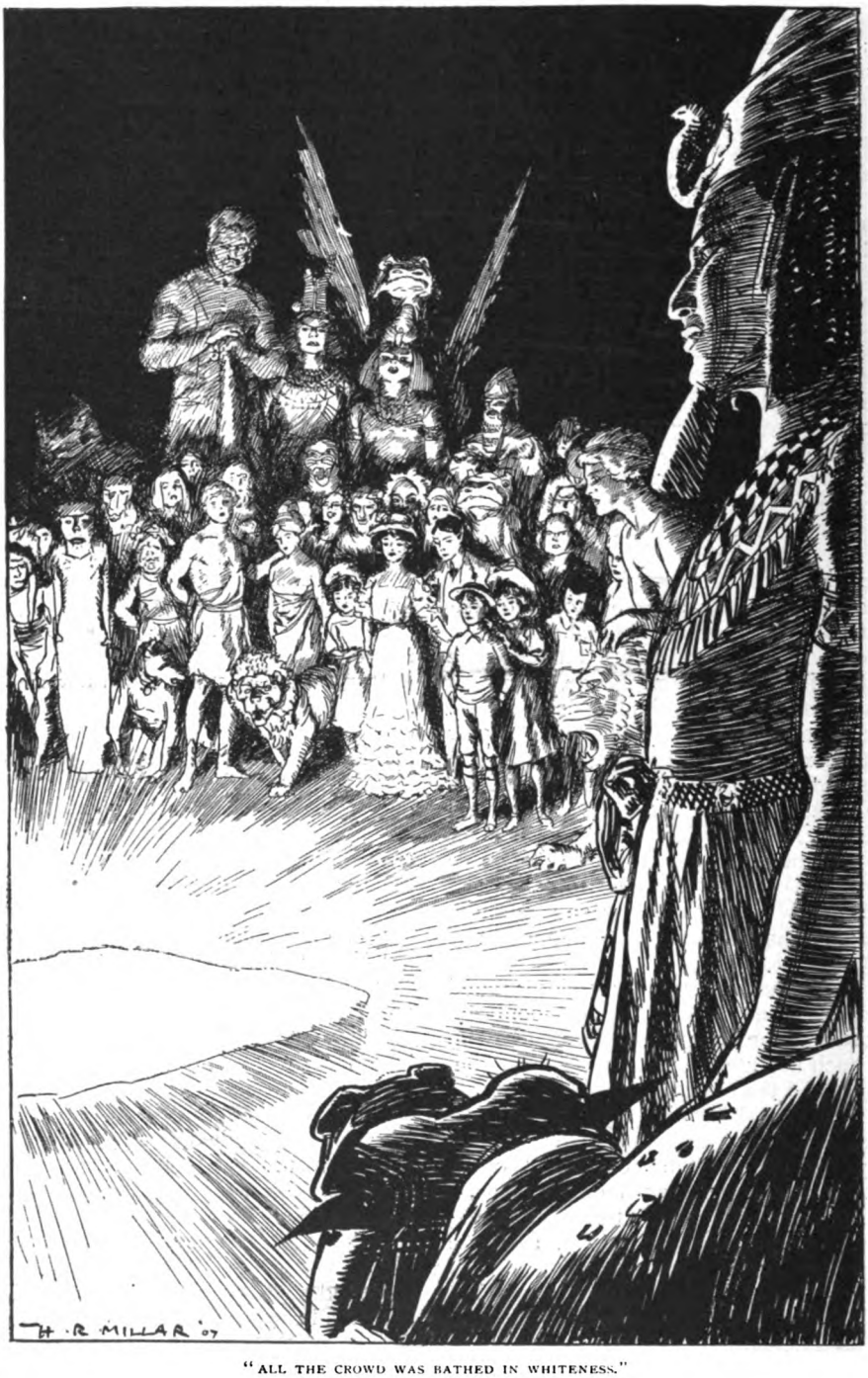
"I wish, then," said Lord Yalding's lover, "that all the magic this ring has wrought may be undone, and that the ring itself may be no more and no less than a charm to bind thee and me together for evermore."

She ceased. And as she ceased the enchanted light died away—the windows of granted wishes went out, like magic-lantern pictures. Gerald's candle faintly lighted a rudely-arched cave, and where Psyche's statue had been was a stone with something carved on it.

Gerald held the light low.

"It is her grave," the girl said.

Next day no one could remember anything at all exactly. But a good many things were changed.



"ALL THE CROWD WAS BATHED IN WHITENESS."

"GERALD HELD THE LIGHT LOW."

There was no ring but the plain gold ring that mademoiselle found clasped in her hand when she woke in her own bed in the morning.

More than half the jewels in the panelled room were gone, and those that remained had no panelling to cover them; they just lay bare on the velvet-covered shelves. There was no passage at the back of the Temple of Flora. Quite a lot of the secret passages and hidden rooms had disappeared. And there were not nearly so many statues in the garden as everyone had supposed, and large pieces of the castle were missing, and had to be replaced at great expense. From which we may conclude that Lord Yalding's ancestor had used the ring a good deal to help him in his building.

However, the jewels that were left were quite enough to pay for everything.

The suddenness with which all the ring-magic was undone was such a shock to everyone concerned that they now almost doubt that any magic ever happened.

But it is certain that Lord Yalding married the French governess, and that a plain gold ring was used in the ceremony, and this, if you come to think of it, could be no other than the magic ring, turned, by that last wish, into a charm to keep him and his wife together for ever.

Also, if all this story is nonsense and a make-up—if Gerald and Jimmy and Kathleen and Mabel have merely imposed on my trusting nature by a pack of unlikely inventions—how do you account for the paragraph which appeared in the papers the day after the magic of the moonrising?

"Mysterious Disappearance of a Well-Known City Man," it said, and then went on to say how a gentleman well known and much respected in financial circles had vanished, leaving no trace.

"Mr. U. W. Ugli," the papers continued, "had remained late, working at his office, as was his occasional habit. The office door was found locked, and on its being broken open the clothes of the unfortunate gentleman were found in a heap on the floor. Of his body there seemed to be no trace. The police, however, are stated to have a clue."

If they have they have kept it to themselves. But I do not think they can have a clue, because, of course, that respected gentleman was the Ugly Wugly who became real when, in search of a really good hotel, he got into the Hall of Granted Wishes, and became real.

And if none of this story ever happened, how is it that those four children are such friends with Lord and Lady Yalding and stay at the Towers most of their holidays?

It is all very well for all of them to pretend that the whole of this story is my own invention.

Facts are facts, and you can't explain them away.

THE END.

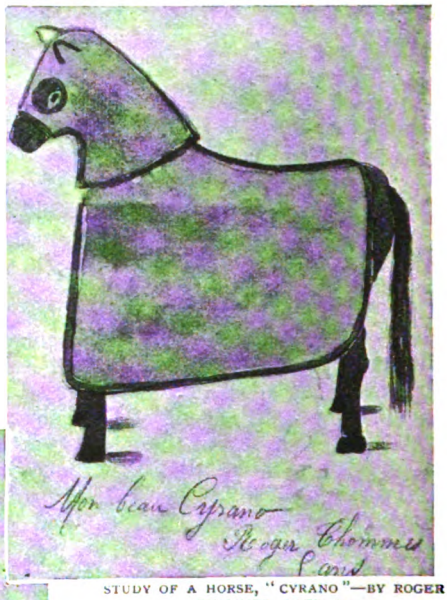
A Children's Picture Exhibition.

NURSE AND HER SOLDIER—BY EDITH MONGE, AGED 9.

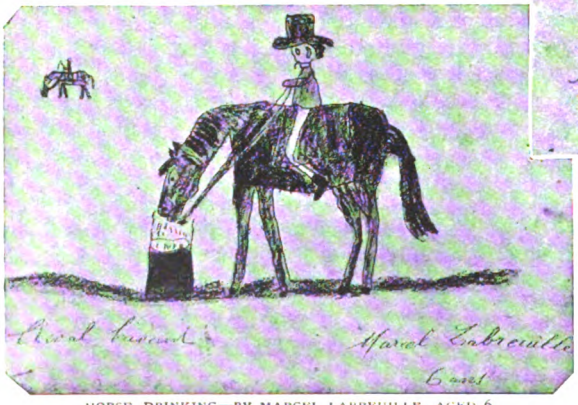
THE idea of the Juveniles' Salon in the Petit Palais, wherein should be exhibited pictures from pen and brush wielded by juvenile fingers, was proposed quite in a serious moment, by a well-known doctor, to the exhibition committee The big artists of the day have their salon across the way; why should not the children of artistic temperament be given a chance to display their abilities in an exhibition that was professedly devoted to them? Who knew but that, even as the Grand Salon brought to light genius that had been hiding itself under a bushel, the salon in the Petit Palais might be equally successful in discovering budding geniuses in the world of art?

So the invitations went forth to the youngsters in the Communal schools of Paris and its suburbs, to the scholars in the first forms of the Government Lycées, and to those little ones who were still studying drawing and painting in their family circles, to contribute to what proved to be the most unique picture exhibition of modern times.

Sketches in pen and pencil and water-colours poured in by thousands from the moment of the announcement till the closing hour; by post and by hand they came, framed and unframed, on scraps of paper torn from copy-books, on Bristol board, and on canvas. What an insight into the mysteries of the childish mind the exhibition



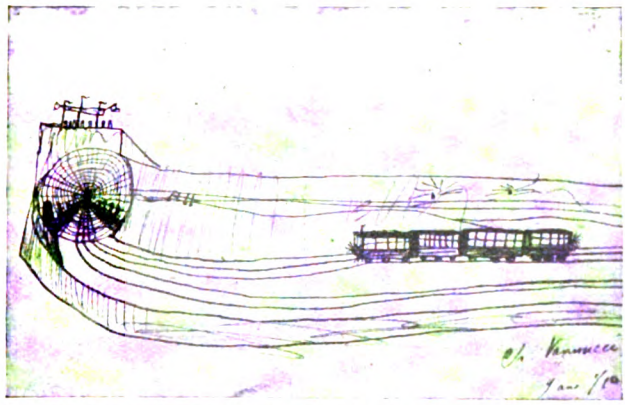
STUDY OF A HORSE, "CYRANO"—BY ROGER THOMMES, AGED 5.



HORSE DRINKING—BY MARCEL LABREUILLE, AGED 6.

provided, apart from the artistic merits or demerits of the individual pictures displayed! It laid bare that wonderful complex thing which so few grown-up persons can understand, and provided them with a means of understanding it. The exhibition was divided into three

classes as to ages. The first contained the efforts of children aged from five to seven years, the second from seven to nine, and the third from nine to twelve. A very admirable idea this, in that it made the judging fairer to all concerned, and assisted one to remark the evolution and growth of infantile ideas concerning men and things.

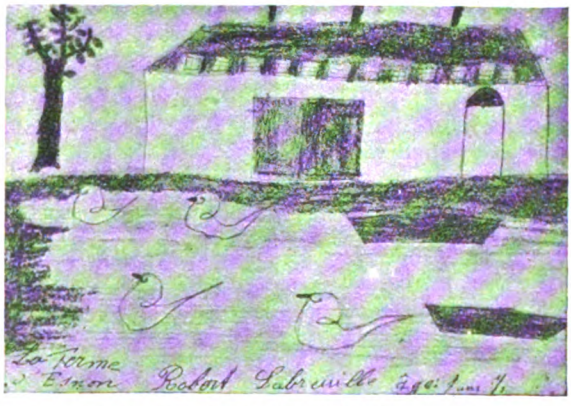


THE PARIS METROPOLITAN RAILWAY—BY CHARLES VANNUCCI, AGED 9.

To deal with this unique collection picture by picture is obviously impossible. One can only generalize on the whole exhibition, illustrating it with specimens from the different classes.

No one passing through the Tuileries Gardens or the Bois de Boulogne on a fine day can fail to remark the Parisian nursemaid. There is nothing young or giddy about her, and when out with her charges she does not leave them to roam as they will whilst she converses with a gendarme or a soldier, whatever she may do when she has her evening out. Generally she will be seen with five or six friends of her kind seated in a circle conversing and sewing, while the children play therein; but "la nounou" who came under the observation of Mlle. Edith Monge must have been an exception, since Edith depicts her walking in the Bois with "M. Martin du 28e Régiment."

PORTRAIT OF MY DOLL—BY JEAN FROIS, AGED 7.



ESNON FARM—BY ROBERT LABREUILLE, AGED 7½.

And if the young artist truthfully depicted the flowing ribbons of the nurse, she wore a pattern of plaid that would have made the average Parisienne stare, used as she is to this kind of *étoffe*.

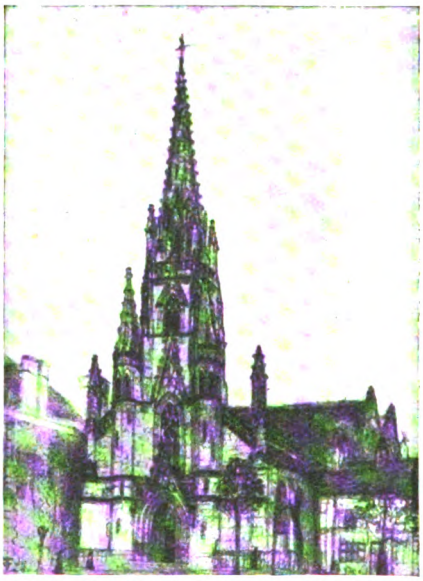
Although the French can scarcely be said to be devoted to the horse, seeing how they have neglected the poor creature in favour of the automobile—and this reminds me of one picture of a string of motor-cars scaling cliffs and mountains—the French infant is as ready as the English child to reduce the noble steed to paper. The "Horse Drinking," by a youngster of six, here reproduced, is extremely funny, and made the more so by its colouring. Bucephalus himself was bright yellow with a dirty brown tail, while Alexander boasted a blue jacket and large yellow hat, and, judging from the one hair on his chin, had been vainly endeavouring to raise a beard, which at this moment is what the young Parisian is endeavouring his utmost to do. Please do not fail to note the "study" for the grand work, pasted up in the left-hand corner. Another effort in the horse-drawing line is "Mon Beau Cyrano," by a child of five years, who had evidently taken his toy for a model.

Of Parisian views we reproduce the

Metropolitan—the new electric underground railway not long opened in Paris. This is an ink drawing, and, if the youth of nine who did it has faithfully copied the metals, it is no longer difficult to understand why there are so many accidents on this line. The nursery has afforded us "Le Portrait de ma Poupée," in water-colours—a very substantial little doll it would seem, who is apparently off on a shooting excursion, seeing that he carries a gun and the dog is waiting for him.

The next example, "La Ferme d'Esnon," is by a seven-year-old boy. Note carefully "les canards" on the pond—what noble birds, for the breed of which alone the farm should become famous; and also the tree, with which the soil does not quite seem to agree.

DANTE—BY THADDÉE STYKA, AGED 11.



THE CHURCH OF ST. JEAN—BY PIERRE POITERIN, AGED 11.

To the elder eye these childish efforts are, if nothing more, certainly amusing. No doubt the success which attended them, in that they have been displayed in the exhibition, will inspire their creators with hope and urge them at least to persevere; and, crude as these attempts appear, there is no telling what patience and study will produce in years to come. It is to illustrate this that I have left to the last the best specimens of work shown in the salon, specimens finding a place in the third class, the artists in the three instances illustrated being eleven years old.

Take the monochrome study of a head in oils; I think the head is that of Dante. It is beautifully executed, and yet the artist, Thaddée Styka, is not older than eleven. This head is the best of five pictures he exhibited, all of which it is hard to believe were done by a boy of such tender years. Again, take "L'Eglise St. Jean," by Pierre Poiterin, who showed several studies, from which it was easy to see the possibility of this youth developing one day into a clever all-round artist, although architectural work is undoubtedly his *forte*. And, lastly, a tiny coloured pen-and-ink sketch by "Isabelle," as it was signed. How capitally it carries out the joke above it, and how well it is executed for a child of her few years!

If it were possible, it would be interesting to watch the progress of many of these infantile exhibitors and note where they eventually land in the world of art, for undoubtedly the ability displayed by many of them is above the average; but more interesting still would be the adoption of the idea here in connection with some exhibition of the future.

A WATER-COLOUR SKETCH—BY "ISABELLE," AGED 11.

CURIOSITIES.

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

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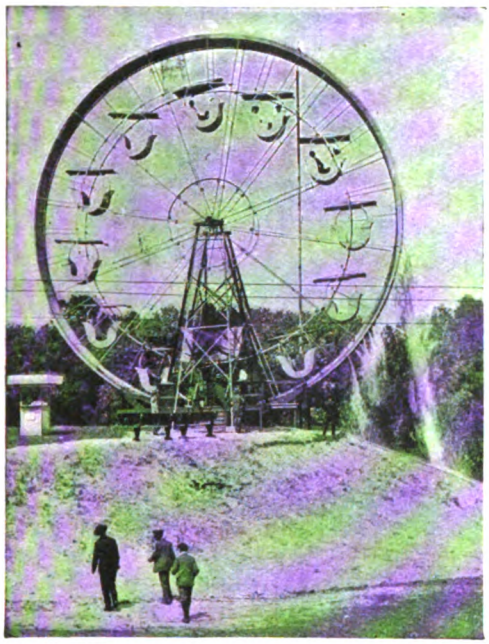
A "BIG WHEEL" RUN BY WATER.

I SEND you a photograph of a big wheel now in operation at an amusement park near this city. It is run by water and is claimed to be the only one of its kind in the world. The water is



forced to the top of the wheel through a large pipe which extends up along the side and enters into a series of buckets which cover the outside rim of the wheel. The weight of the water in the buckets causes the wheel to rotate, the buckets emptying themselves as the wheel goes round. The wheel works on the same principle as an old-time mill-wheel. The tops of the cars which carry the passengers are covered with canvas, so if leakages take place they do not get wet. The water falling from the buckets gives a very pretty effect.—Mr. Chas. Homewood, Hotel Hummel, Waterloo, Iowa.

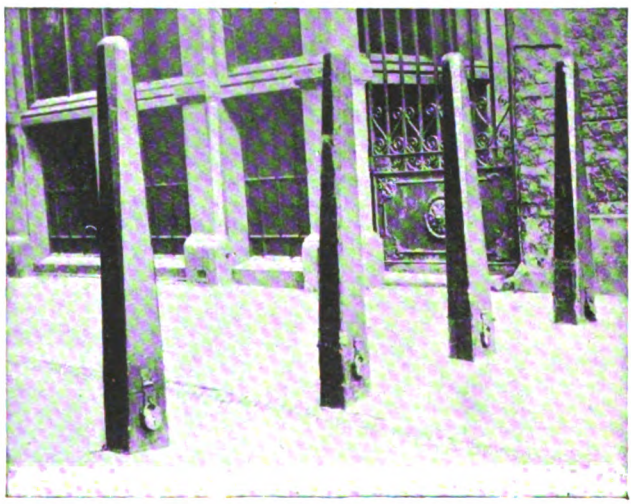
A TAME ROBIN.

THE second photograph is of a robin which comes every day when whistled for to be fed, and feeds out of the hand of the gentleman in the picture; it comes twice or three times a day, and once or twice when it has come down and no notice has been taken of it, it fluttered about and piped till it attracted attention. The robin

will only go to this gentleman or his wife, and will not have anything to do with strangers.—Mr. Gilbert Hogg, Strickland Gate, Kendal.

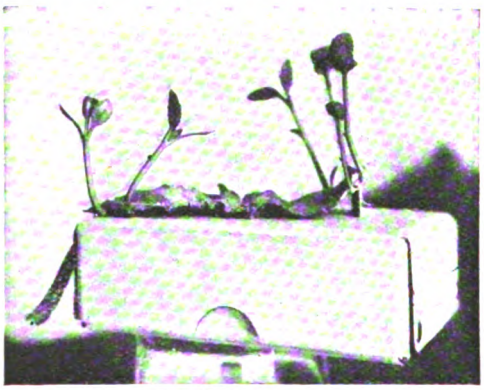
PADLOCKED POSTS.

PADLOCKED posts, such as these, may be seen in the narrow alleys of the City. This, however is not a provision against theft. It is to enable the passage of fire-engines and appliances through these narrow alleys. The posts are sawn through and hinged, and so may be laid flat on the ground.—Mr. C. Horner, Alexandra Road, Hounslow.



A NARROW ESCAPE.

THE above photograph shows the remarkable effect of the bursting of a muzzle-loading gun which was being used for the purpose of bird-scaring by a man in the employ of Mr. John Sutton, farmer, of Swanley, Kent. Although the barrel was split practically from breech to muzzle, and assumed such an extraordinary shape, the man was entirely uninjured, but perhaps somewhat more scared than the birds.—Mr. Charles Blanks, Dartford.

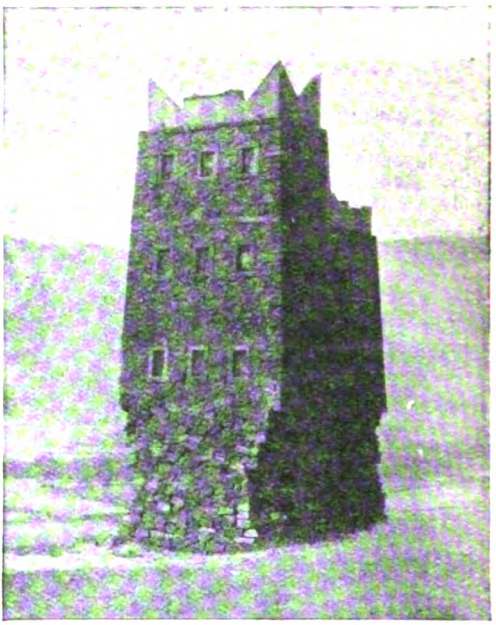


THE AIR-PLANT.

MY photograph represents a leaf of what is here commonly known as the Air-plant, with six young plants growing out of it. After the leaf had lain a week on my bookshelf a little plant made its appearance at each angle of the scallops. Only six of these continued to grow, and attained their present height (three inches) in about fifty days, at the end of which they showed signs of fading, and this only when the parent leaf was sapped of all nourishment and was dry.—Surgeon C. Delgruyther, Murree Hills, India.

CHINESE WATCH-TOWERS.

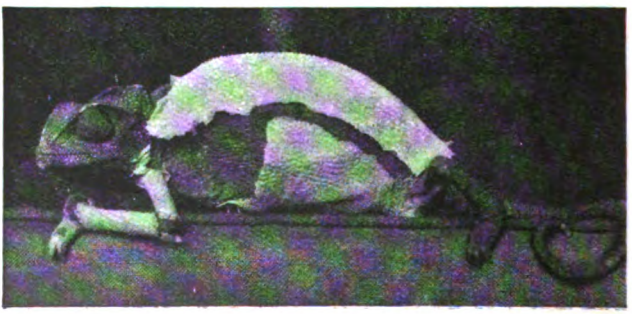
THIS is a photograph of one of the curious sham watch-towers dotted about the plain among the Western Hills near Peking. They are in



commanding positions, and are to all appearance fortified towers with battlements, and cannon ready at each window. But the tower has no entrance, and no inside except earth, while the cannon are black circles painted on wooden boards smeared with paint. The wood and stones are crumbling away with the sun, snow, rain, and frost. — Mr. S. Beggin, Alsager, Cheshire.

CHAMELEON CASTING ITS COAT.

THIS chameleon was brought from Morocco last December, and it has lived in perfect health for eight months in Cumberland, through a prolonged winter and a cold, wet summer. It has been fed on flies, caterpillars, and crickets. A day or two previously it began turning white in patches as though attacked by some disease, and on August 25th the skin began to split and loosen in great flakes, and it was then discovered that the chameleon was casting its skin. The photograph was taken by me just before the skin fell off. The skin of the head, back legs, and tail remains as yet unchanged. — Miss Decima Graham, Edmond Castle, Carlisle.

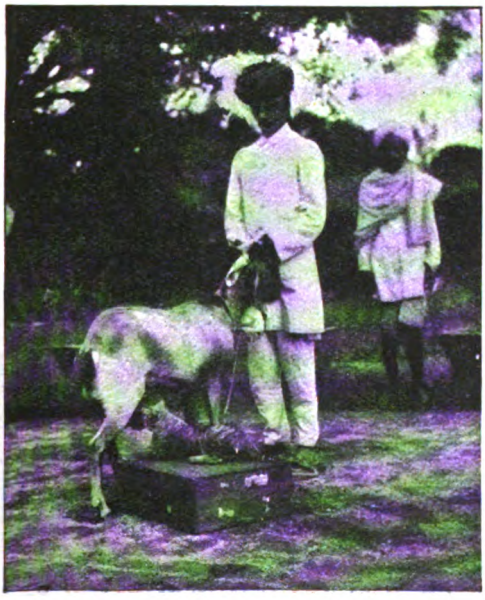


PLANTED ROOTS UPWARD.

SOME years ago this elm tree was planted in a garden at one of our Clyde watering-places, but contrary to the laws of Nature it was planted with the roots up—this being done merely for the sake of an experiment. It is now a most healthy specimen of its kind, and one can only conclude from this that the rightful branches have gallantly undertaken to do the obscure work for once.—Mr. A. H. Brown, 1, Broomhill Avenue, Partick, W.

A DANGEROUS PET.

A LADY in Jubbulpore, India, has a pet tiger cub which is being nursed by a goat. A photograph taken when it was about seven weeks old shows the cub with its foster-mother, which has to be blindfolded during the nursing process. The lady hopes to be able to keep the tiger "kitten" for some time, but experience has shown that a pet of this kind becomes somewhat dangerous when five or six months old. Even now, when rolled over in its gambols with a puppy, it shows its temper by retaliating with a smack, though it purrs like a cat when pleased. —Mr. H. E. Muir, 149, Oakwood Court, Kensington.

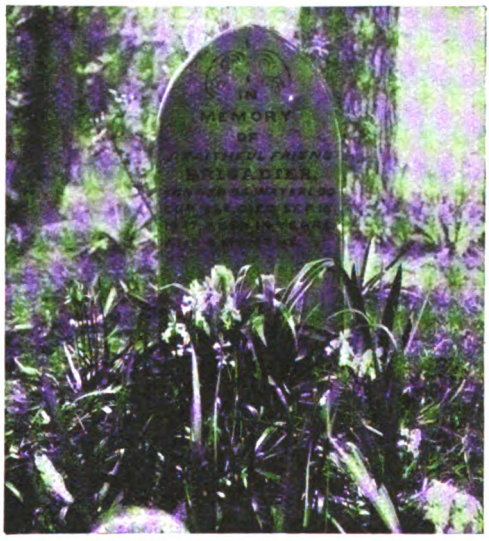


THE SNAKE'S-HEAD CHRYSALIS.

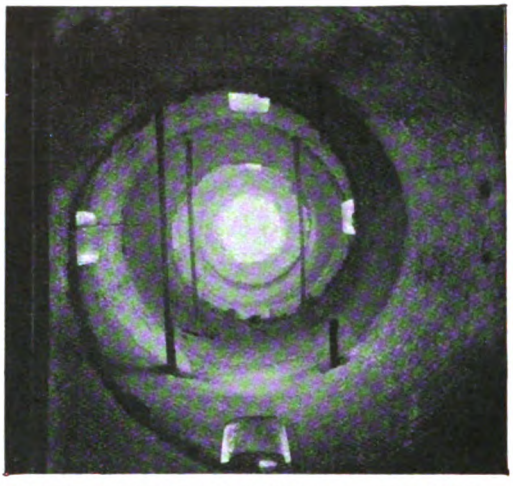
THIS is a most remarkable instance of what might be called "Protective Mimicry." It is the photograph of the chrysalis of a large moth found in Upper Burma. The chrysalis is fixed by its tail to a small branch, and bears a striking resemblance to the head of a bird-eating snake which is found in the same neighbourhood.—Mr. Hugh Main, B.Sc., Almondale, Buckingham Road, S. Woodford, N.E.

A STRAY DOG THAT WON FAME AND FORTUNE.

IT is rarely, if ever, one hears of a stray dog found practically starving in the streets of a great city ultimately rising to the pinnacle of fame and bringing to its kindly benefactor a fortune. Such, however, is the history of the celebrated dog Brigadier, who forty years ago, after being hustled and bustled about the streets of Manchester, found a sympathetic friend in the late Mr. Foulkes of that city. Finding the dog destitute in the street Mr. Foulkes took it home, and

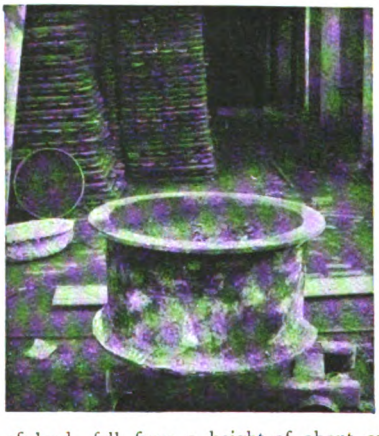


by careful training succeeded in winning the much-coveted Waterloo Cup with him. With the money thus won Mr. Foulkes purchased an hotel at Withington, near Manchester, which he re-named The Waterloo, after the success of the dog. Mr. Foulkes died leaving a fortune. The hotel is still in possession of the deceased gentleman's family, and there may be seen in a quiet, secluded spot of the hotel grounds a tombstone erected to the memory of Brigadier. As will be seen from the photograph the grave is reverently preserved. — Mr. P. L. Glendenning, 82, Gordon Hill, Enfield, N.



THE BURNING OF A SHOT TOWER—AND AFTER.

IN January we had a serious fire here, resulting in the gutting of our shot tower. The photograph represents the condition of it after the fire. Along with it I am sending you a photograph of a cast-iron pot full of lead, as it was drawn from the *débris* at the bottom of the tower. This pot, weighing about thirty hundredweight and containing thirty hundredweight



of lead, fell from a height of about one hundred and eighty feet without being broken. We have melted out the lead, and the pot is now as sound as a bell. It was made by a local firm, Messrs. Mowle and Meacock, and ought to be some testimony to the excellence of their work.—Mr. H. Davison, Messrs. Walker, Parker, and Co., Ltd., Lead Works, Chester.

A "STRAND" PICTURE GALLERY.

IN this far-away corner of the Empire picture-lovers have no Tate Gallery to minister to their perceptions of the beautiful. However, a substitute is found in the excellent series of reproductions that have reached us through THE STRAND MAGAZINE this year; and I enclose a photograph which shows a section of a study-wall adorned with pictures from that source, all of which are clearly discernible. They are draped with an art muslin that matches the soft colouring of the wall, and the arrangement, which is continued in other parts of the room, is much admired. — The Rev. J. W. McGahey, Fauresmith, Orange River Colony.

THE THRUSH AND THE CHOCOLATE EGG.

AT a children's party, where several chocolate eggs were hidden in the garden, this egg was put into a thrush's nest where there was already an egg of her own. It was not found until the following day, when it was in the condition shown. The bird had come and found the strange-looking egg and begun to eat it, and then, softening the hole with the warmth of her body, laid another egg in it. The egg is firmly embedded in the chocolate.—Mr. Edward Cazalet, Fairlawn, Tonbridge.

"'SH-H-H-H!' WARNED THE GIRL, AND SHE LAID A FINGER ON HER LIPS."

(*See page* 606.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

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The Chase of the Golden Plate.

By JACQUES FUTRELLE.

A STORY IN THREE PARTS.

Part I.—THE BURGLAR AND THE GIRL.

CARDINAL RICHELIEU and the Mikado stepped out on a narrow balcony overlooking the entrance to Seven Oaks, lighted their cigarettes, and stood idly watching the throng as it poured up the wide marble steps. Here was an over-corpulent Dowager Empress of China, there an Indian warrior in full paint and toggery, and mincing along behind him two giggling Geisha girls. Next, in splendid robes of rank, came the Czar of Russia. The Mikado smiled.

"An old enemy of mine," he remarked to the Cardinal.

A Watteau shepherdess was assisted out of a motor-car by Christopher Columbus, and they came up the walk arm in arm, while a Pierrette ran beside them, laughing up into their faces. D'Artagnan, Athos, Aramis, and Porthos swaggered along with insolent, clanking swords.

"Ah!" exclaimed the Cardinal, "there are four gentlemen whom I know well."

Mary Queen of Scots, Pocahontas, the Sultan of Turkey, and Mr. Micawber chatted amicably together in one language. Behind them came a figure which immediately arrested attention. It was a Burglar, with dark lantern in one hand and revolver in the other. A black mask was drawn down to his lips, a slouch hat shaded his eyes, and a kit of the tools of his profession swung from one shoulder.

"By George!" commented the Cardinal. "Now, that's clever."

"Looks like the real thing," the Mikado added.

The Burglar stood aside a moment, allowing a diamond-burdened Queen Elizabeth to pass, then came on up the steps. The Cardinal and the Mikado passed through an open window into the reception-room to witness his arrival.

"Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth!" the graven-faced servant announced.

The Burglar handed a card to the liveried Voice, and noted, with obvious amusement, a fleeting expression of astonishment on the stolid face. Perhaps it was there because the card had been offered in the hand which held the revolver. The Voice glanced at the name on the card and took a deep breath of relief.

"Bill the Burglar!" he announced.

There was a murmur of astonishment and interest in the reception hall and the ball-room beyond. Thus it was that the Burglar found himself the centre of attention for a moment, while a ripple of laughter ran around. The entrance of a Clown, bounding in behind him, drew all eyes away, however, and the Burglar was absorbed in the crowd.

It was only a few minutes later that Cardinal Richelieu and the Mikado, seeking diversion, isolated the Burglar and dragged him off to the smoking-room. There the Czar of Russia, who was on such terms of intimacy with the Mikado that he called him "Mike," joined them, and they smoked together.

"How did you ever come to hit on a costume like that?" asked the Cardinal of the Burglar.

The Burglar laughed, disclosing two rows of strong white teeth, and a cleft in the square-cut, clean-shaven chin visible below the mask became more pronounced. A woman would have called it a dimple.

"I wanted something different," he explained. "I couldn't imagine anything more

"'BETTER NOT DO THAT,' SUGGESTED THE BURGLAR, CASUALLY. 'IT'S LOADED.'"

extraordinary than a real burglar here ready to do business, so I came."

"It's lucky the police didn't see you," remarked the Czar.

Again the Burglar laughed. He was evidently a good-natured craftsman, despite his sinister garb.

"That was my one fear—that I should be pinched before I arrived," he replied. "Pinched, I may explain, is a technical term in my profession, meaning jugged, nabbed, collared, run in. It seemed that my fears had some foundation, too, for when I drove up in my motor-car and stepped out a couple of plain-clothes men stared at me pretty hard."

He laid aside the dark lantern and revolver to light a fresh cigarette. The Mikado picked up the lantern and flashed the light on and off several times, while the Czar sighted the revolver at the floor.

"Better not do that," suggested the Burglar, casually. "It's loaded."

"Loaded?" repeated the Czar. He laid down the revolver gingerly.

"I can assure you it is," and the Burglar laughed quizzically. "I'm the real thing, you see—puff! puff!—so naturally my revolver is loaded. I think I ought to be able to make—puff! puff!—quite a good haul, as we say, before—puff! puff!—unmasking time."

"If you're as clever as your appearance would indicate," said the Cardinal, admiringly, "I see no reason why it shouldn't be worth while. You might, for instance, make a collection of Elizabethan jewels. I have

noticed four Elizabeths so far, and it's early yet."

"Oh, I'll make it pay," the Burglar assured him, lightly. "I'm pretty clever; practised a good deal, you know. Just to show you that I am an expert, here are a watch and pin I took from my friend the Czar five minutes ago."

He extended a well-gloved hand in which lay the watch and diamond pin. The Czar stared at them a moment in frank astonishment, felt himself all over in sudden trepidation, then laughed sheepishly. The Mikado tilted his cigar up to a level with the slant eyes of his mask and laughed.

"In the language of diplomacy, Nick," he told the Czar, "you are what is known as 'easy.' I thought I had convinced you of that."

"Gad, you *are* clever!" remarked the Cardinal. "I might have used you along with D'Artagnan and the others."

The Burglar laughed again, and stood up lazily.

"Come on, this is stupid," he suggested. "Let's go out and see what's doing."

"I say, just between ourselves, tell us who you are," urged the Czar. "Your voice seems familiar, but I can't place you."

"Wait till unmasking time," retorted the Burglar, good-naturedly. "Then you'll know. Or, if you think you could bribe that stone image who took my card at the door, you might try. He'll remember me. I never saw a man so startled in all my life as he was when I appeared."

The quartet sauntered out into the ballroom just as the signal for the grand march was given. A few minutes later the kaleidoscopic picture began to move. Steven Randolph, the host, as Sir Walter Raleigh, and his superb wife, as Cleopatra, looked upon the mass of colour, and gleaming shoulders and jewels, and brilliant uniforms, and found it good—extremely good.

Mr. Randolph smiled behind his mask at the striking incongruities on every hand—Queen Elizabeth and Mr. Micawber, Cardinal Richelieu and a Pierrette, a Clown dancing attendance on Marie Antoinette. The Czar of Russia paid deep and devoted attention to a light-footed Geisha girl, while the Mikado and Folly, a jingling thing of bells and abbreviated skirts, romped together.

The grotesque figure of the march was the Burglar. His revolver was thrust carelessly into a pocket, and the dark lantern hung at his belt. He was pouring a stream of pleasing nonsense into the august ear of Lady Macbeth, nimbly seeking at the same time to evade the pompous train of the Dowager Empress. The grand march came to an end, and the chattering throng broke up into little groups.

Cardinal Richelieu strolled along with a Pierrette on his arm.

"Business good?" he inquired of the Burglar.

"Expect it to be," was the reply.

The Pierrette came, and standing on her tiptoes—silly, impractical sort of toes they were—made a *moue* at the Burglar.

"Oooh!" she exclaimed. "You are perfectly horrid!"

"Thank you," retorted the Burglar.

He bowed gravely, and the Cardinal with his companion passed on. The Burglar stood gazing after them a moment, then glanced around the room curiously two or three times. He might have been looking for someone. Finally he wandered away aimlessly through the crowd.

II.

HALF an hour later the Burglar stood alone, thoughtfully watching the dancers as they whirled by. A light hand fell on his arm—he started a little—and a soft voice sounded in his ear, soft with the tone of a caress.

"Excellent, Dick, excellent!"

The Burglar turned quickly, to face a girl—an American girl of the Golden West, with deliciously rounded chin, slightly parted rose-red lips, and sparkling, eager eyes as blue as—as blue as—well, they were blue eyes. An envious mask hid cheeks and brow, but a sombrero was perched arrogantly on crisp, ruddy-gold hair, flaunting a tricoloured ribbon. A revolver swung at her hip—the wrong hip—and a bowie-knife, singularly inoffensive in appearance, was thrust through her girdle. The Burglar looked curiously a moment, then smiled.

"How did you know me?" he asked.

"By your chin," she replied. "You can never hide yourself behind a mask that doesn't cover that."

The Burglar touched his chin with one gloved hand.

"I forgot that," he remarked, ruefully.

"Hadn't you seen me?"

"No."

The Girl drew nearer and laid one hand lightly on his arm; her voice dropped mysteriously.

"Is everything ready?" she asked.

"Oh, yes," he assured her quickly. His voice, too, was lowered cautiously.

"Did you come in the car?"

"Yes."

"And the little casket?"

For an instant the Burglar hesitated.

"The casket!" he repeated.

"Certainly, the casket. Did you get it all right?"

The Burglar looked at her with a new, business-like expression on his lips. The Girl returned his steady gaze for an instant, then her eyes dropped. A faint colour glowed in her white chin. The Burglar suddenly laughed admiringly.

"Yes, I got it," he said.

She took a deep breath quickly, and her white hands fluttered a little.

"We shall have to go in a few minutes, sha'n't we?" she asked, uneasily.

"I suppose so," he replied.

"Certainly before unmasking time," she said, "because—because I think there is someone here who knows or suspects that——"

"Suspects what?" demanded the Burglar.

"Sh-h-h-h!" warned the girl, and she laid a finger on her lips. "Not so loud. Someone might hear. Here are some people coming now that I'm afraid of. They know me. Meet me in the conservatory in five minutes. I don't want them to see me talking to you."

She moved away quickly, and the Burglar looked after her with admiration and some impalpable quality other than that in his eyes. He was turning away toward the conservatory when he ran into the arms of an over-sized man lumpily clad in the dress of a Pirate. The lumpy individual stood back and sized him up.

"I say, young fellow, that's a swell rig you've got there," he remarked.

The Burglar glanced at him in polite astonishment—perhaps it was the tone of the remark.

"Glad you like it," he said, coldly, and passed on.

As he waited in the conservatory the amusement died out of his eyes and his lips were drawn into a straight, sharp line. He had seen the lumpy individual speak to another man, indicating generally the direction of the conservatory as he did so. After a moment the Girl returned in deep agitation.

"We must go now, at once," she whispered, hurriedly. "They suspect us. I know it, I know it."

"I'm afraid so," said the Burglar, grimly. "That's why that detective spoke to me.

"Detective!" gasped the Girl.

"Yes; a detective disguised as a Pirate"

"Oh, if they are watching us, what shall we do?"

The Burglar glanced out and saw the man to whom the lumpy individual had spoken coming toward the conservatory, and turned suddenly to the Girl.

"Do you really want to go with me?" he asked.

"Certainly," she replied, eagerly.

"You are making no mistake?"

"No, Dick, no," she said; "but if we are caught——"

"Do as I say and we won't be caught," declared the Burglar. His tone was sharp, commanding now. "You go on alone toward the front door. Pass out as if to get a breath of fresh air. I'll follow in a minute; watch for me. This detective is getting too curious for comfort. Outside we'll take the first motor-car and run for it."

He thoughtfully whirled the barrel of his revolver in his fingers as he stared out into the ball-room. The Girl clung to him helplessly a moment; her hand trembled on his arm.

"I'm frightened," she confessed. "Oh, Dick, if——"

"Don't lose your nerve!" he commanded. "If you do we shall both be caught. Go on now, and do as I say. I'll come—but I may come in a hurry. Watch for me."

For just a moment more the Girl clung to his arm.

"Oh, Dick, you darling!" she whispered; then turning she left him there.

From the door of the conservatory the Burglar watched her splendid, lithe figure as she threaded her way through the crowd. Finally she passed beyond his view, and he sauntered carelessly toward the door. Once he glanced back. The lumpy individual was following slowly. Then he saw a liveried servant approach the host and whisper to him excitedly.

"This is my cue to move," the Burglar told himself grimly.

Still watching, he saw the servant point directly at him. The host, with a sudden gesture, tore off his mask, and the Burglar accelerated his pace.

"Stop that man!" called the host.

For one brief instant there was the dead silence which follows general astonishment, and the Burglar ran for the door. Several pairs of hands reached out from the crowd toward him.

"There he goes, there!" exclaimed the Burglar, excitedly. "That man ahead. I'll catch him."

The ruse opened the way, and he went

through. The Girl was waiting at the foot of the steps.

"They're coming!" he panted, as he dragged her along. "Climb into that last car on the end there."

Without a word the Girl ran to the car and clambered into the front seat. Several men ran out of the house. Wonderingly her eyes followed the vague figure of the Burglar as he ran along in the shadow of a wall. He paused beneath a window, picked up something, and raced for the car.

"Stop him!" came a cry.

The Burglar flung his burden at the Girl's feet with a clatter, and leaped. The car swayed as he landed beside her. With a quick twist of the wheel he headed out.

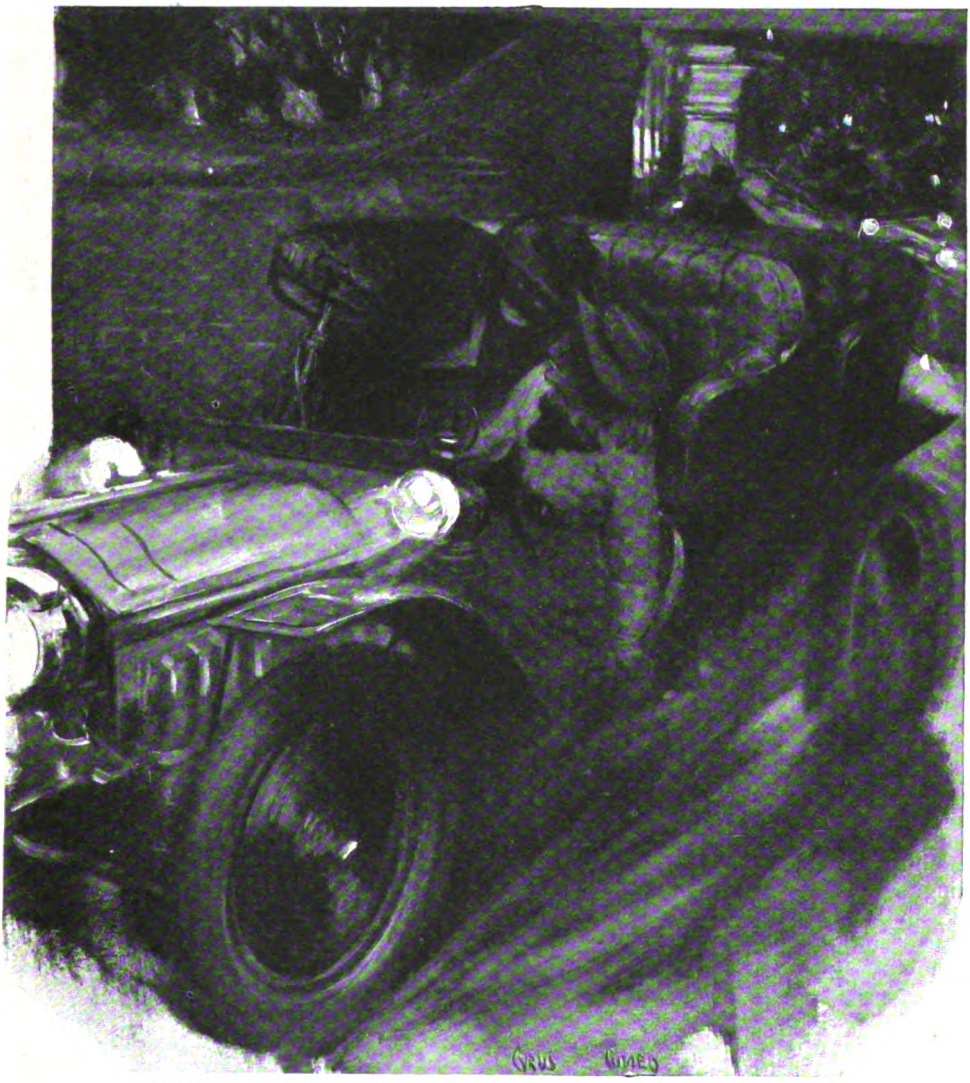
"Hurry, Dick, they're coming!" gasped the Girl.

The motor beneath them whirred and panted, and the car began to move.

"Halt, or I'll fire!" came another cry.

"Down!" commanded the Burglar.

His hand fell on the Girl's shoulder heavily, and he dragged her below the level of the seat. Then, bending low over the wheel, he gave the car half power. It leapt out into the road in the path of its own light, just as there came a pistol-shot from behind, followed instantly by another. The car sped on.



"IT LEAPT OUT INTO THE ROAD JUST AS THERE CAME A PISTOL-SHOT FROM BEHIND."

III.

STEVEN RANDOLPH, millionaire, owner of Seven Oaks and host of the masked ball, was only able to tell the police what had happened, and not the manner of its happening. Briefly, this was that a thief, cunningly disguised as a Burglar, with dark lantern and revolver in hand, had surreptitiously attended the masked ball by entering at the front door and presenting an invitation card. And when Mr. Randolph got thus far in his story even he couldn't keep his face straight.

The sum-total of everyone's knowledge, therefore, was this :—

Soon after the grand march a servant entered the smoking-room and found the Burglar there alone, standing beside an open window looking out. This smoking-room connected by a corridor with a small dining-room where the Randolph gold plate was kept in ostentatious seclusion. As the servant entered the smoking-room the Burglar turned away from the window and went out into the ball-room. He did not carry a bundle ; he did not appear to be excited.

Fifteen or twenty minutes later the servant discovered that eleven plates of the gold service, valued roughly at three thousand pounds, were missing. He informed Mr. Randolph. The information, naturally enough, did not elevate the host's enjoyment of the ball, and he did things hastily, as has been shown.

Meanwhile—that is, between the time the Burglar left the smoking-room until he passed out of the front door—the Burglar had talked earnestly with a masked Girl. It was established that when she left him in the conservatory she went out of the front door. There she was joined by the Burglar, and then came their sensational flight in the motor-car—a forty horse-power car that moved like the wind. The car in which the Burglar had gone to Seven Oaks was left behind ; thus far it had not been claimed.

The identity of the Burglar and the Girl made the mystery. It was easy to conjecture —that's what the police said—how the Burglar got away with the gold plate. He went into the smoking-room, then into the dining-room, dropped the gold plate into a sack, and threw the sack out of a window. It was beautifully simple. Just what the girl had to do with it wasn't very clear ; perhaps a score or more articles of jewellery which had been reported missing by guests engaged her attention.

It was also easy to see how the Burglar and the Girl had been able to shake off pursuit by the police in two other motor-cars. The car they had chosen was admittedly the fastest of the scores there ; the night was pitch-dark—and, besides, a Burglar like that was liable to do anything Two shots had been fired at him by the lumpy Pirate, who was really Detective Cunningham, but they had only spurred him on.

These things were easy to understand. But the identity of the pair was a different and more difficult proposition, and there remained the task of dragging them out of obscurity. This fell to the lot of Detective Mallory, who represented the Supreme Police Intelligence of the district, happily combining a No. 11 shoe and a No. 6 hat. He was a cautious, suspicious, far-seeing man, as police detectives go. For instance, it was he who explained the method of the theft with a lucidity that was astounding.

Detective Mallory and two or three of his satellites heard Mr. Randolph's story, the statements of the servants, then the statements of his two men who had attended the ball in costume—one of whom, wearing the get-up of a Pirate, had, with a love of realism equal to that of the Burglar, carried his revolver loaded. After all this Mr. Mallory chewed his cigar and thought violently for several minutes. Mr. Randolph looked on expectantly ; he didn't want to miss anything.

"As I understand it, Mr. Randolph," said the Supreme Police Intelligence at last, "the invitation cards presented at the door by your guests each bore the name of the person to whom it was issued?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Randolph.

"Ah!" exclaimed the detective, shrewdly. "Then we have a clue."

"Where are those cards, Curtis?" asked Mr. Randolph of the servant who had received them at the door.

"I didn't know they were of further value, sir, and they were thrown away—into the fire."

Mr. Mallory was crestfallen.

"Did you notice if the card presented at the door by the Burglar on the evening of the masked ball at Seven Oaks bore a name?" he asked. He liked to be explicit.

"Yes, sir. I noticed it particularly because the gentleman was dressed so queerly."

"Do you remember the name?"

"No, sir."

"Would you remember it if you saw it or heard it again?"

The servant looked at Mr. Mallory helplessly.

"I don't think I would, sir," he answered.

"And the Girl—did you notice the card she gave you?"

"I don't remember her at all, sir. Many of the ladies wore wraps when they came in, and her costume would not have been noticeable if she had one on."

The Supreme Intelligence was thoughtful for another few minutes. At last he turned to Mr. Randolph again.

"You are certain there was only *one* man at that ball dressed as a Burglar?" he asked.

"Yes, thank Heaven!" replied Mr. Randolph, fervently. "If there'd been another one they might have taken the piano."

The Supreme Intelligence frowned.

"And this Girl was dressed like a West American girl?" he asked.

"Yes. A sort of Spirit of the West costume."

"And no other woman there wore such a dress?"

"No," responded Mr. Randolph.

"No," echoed the two detectives.

"Now, Mr. Randolph, how many invitations were issued for the ball?"

"Three or four hundred. It's a big house," Mr. Randolph apologized, "and we tried to do the thing properly."

"How many persons do you suppose actually attended the ball?"

"Oh, I don't know. Three hundred, perhaps."

Detective Mallory thought again.

"It's unquestionably the work of two bold and clever professional crooks," he said at last, judicially, and his satellites hung on his words eagerly. "It has every ear-mark of it. They perhaps planned the thing weeks before, and forged invitation cards, or perhaps stole them—perhaps stole them."

He turned suddenly and pointed an accusing finger at the servant Curtis.

"Did you notice the handwriting on the card the Burglar gave you?" he demanded.

"No, sir. Not particularly."

"I mean, do you recall if it was different in any way from the handwriting on the other cards?" insisted the Supreme Intelligence.

"I don't think it was, sir."

"If it had been, would you have noticed it?"

"I—I might have, sir."

"Were the names written on all the invitation cards by the same hand, Mr. Randolph?"

"Yes. My wife's secretary."

Detective Mallory arose and paced backwards and forwards across the room, with wrinkles on his brow.

"Ah!" he said at last, "then we know the cards were *not* forged, but stolen from someone to whom they had been sent. We know this much; therefore——" He paused a moment.

"Therefore all that must be done," Mr. Randolph finished the sentence, "is to find from whom the card or cards were stolen, who presented them at my door, and who got away with the plate."

The Supreme Intelligence glared at him aggressively. Mr. Randolph's face was perfectly serious. It was his gold plate, you know.

"Yes, that's it," Detective Mallory assented. "Now we'll get on with this at once. Downey, you get that car the Burglar left at Seven Oaks, and find its owner; also find the car the Burglar and the Girl escaped in. Cunningham, you go to Seven Oaks and look over the premises. See particularly if the Girl left a wrap—she didn't wear one away from there—and follow that up. Blanton, you take a list of invited guests that Mr. Randolph will give you, check off those persons who are known to have been at the ball, and find out all about those who were not, and—follow that up."

"Lord, that'll take weeks," complained Blanton.

The Supreme Intelligence turned on him fiercely.

"Well?" he demanded. He continued to stare for a moment, and Blanton wrinkled up in the baleful glow of his superior's scorn. "And," Detective Mallory added, magnanimously, "I will do the rest."

Thus the campaign was planned against the Burglar and the Girl.

IV.

HUTCHINSON HATCH was a newspaper reporter, a long, lean, hungry-looking young man with an insatiable appetite for facts. This last was perhaps an astonishing trait in a reporter, and Hatch was positively finicky on the point. That's why his editor believed in him. If Hatch had come in and told his editor that he had seen a blue elephant with pink side-whiskers, his editor would have *known* that that elephant was blue—mentally, morally, physically, spiritually, and everlastingly—not any washed-out green or purple, but blue.

Hatch was remarkable in other ways, too. For instance, he believed in the use of a little human intelligence in his profession. As a matter of fact, on several occasions he had demonstrated that it was really an excellent thing—human intelligence. His mind was

well poised, his methods thorough, his style direct.

Along with dozens of others, Hatch was at work on the Randolph robbery, and knew what the others knew—no more. He had studied the case so closely that he was beginning to believe, strangely enough, that perhaps the police were right in their theory as to the identity of the Burglar and the Girl—that is, that they were professional crooks. Hatch could do a thing like that sometimes—bring his mind to admit the possibility of somebody else being right.

It was on Saturday afternoon—two days after the Randolph affair—that Hatch was sitting in Detective Mallory's private office at police head-quarters, laboriously extracting from the Supreme Intelligence the precise things he had not found out about the robbery. The telephone-bell rang. Hatch caught one end of the conversation—he couldn't help it. It was something like this :—

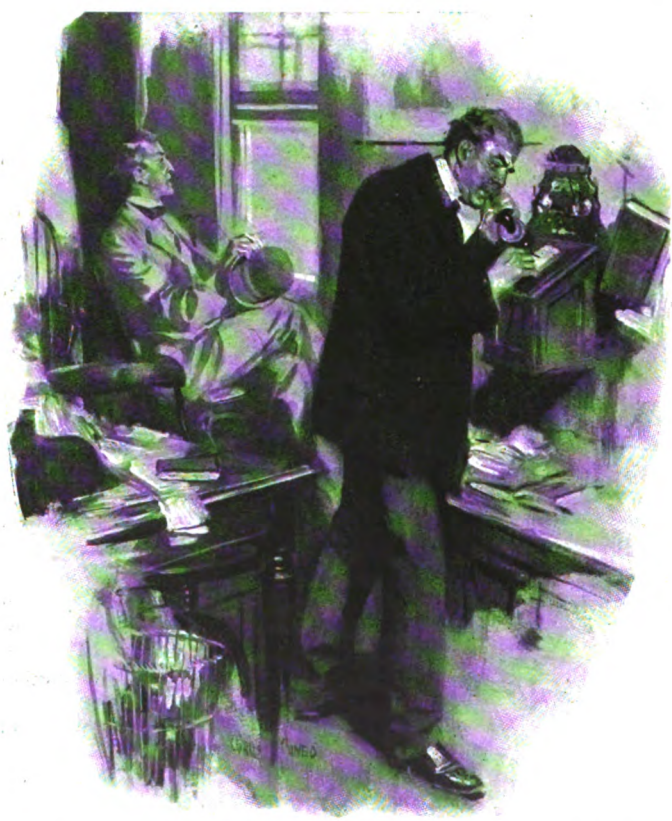
"Halloa!—Yes, Detective Mallory.—Missing?—What's the name?—What?—Oh, Dorothy. Yes?—Merritt?—Oh, Merryman. Well, what the deuce is it then?—SPELL IT!!—M-e-r-e-d-i-t-h. Why didn't you say that at first?—How long has she been gone?—Eh?—Thursday evening?—What does she look like?—Auburn hair. Red, you mean.—Oh, ruddy. I'd like to know what's the difference."

The detective had drawn up a pad of paper and was jotting down what Hatch imagined to be the description of a missing girl. Then :—

"Who is this talking?" asked the detective.

There was a little pause as he got the answer, and, having the answer, he whistled his astonishment, after which he glanced around quickly at the reporter, who was staring dreamily out of a window.

"No," said the Supreme Intelligence into the telephone; "it wouldn't be wise to make it public. It isn't necessary at all. I understand. I'll order a search immediately. No; the newspapers will get nothing of it. Good-bye."



"THE DETECTIVE HAD DRAWN UP A PAD OF PAPER AND WAS JOTTING DOWN WHAT HATCH IMAGINED TO BE THE DESCRIPTION OF A MISSING GIRL."

"A story?" inquired Hatch, carelessly, as the detective hung up the receiver.

"Doesn't amount to anything," was the reply.

"Yes, that's obvious," remarked the reporter, dryly.

"Well, whatever it is, it is not going to be made public," retorted the Supreme Intelligence, sharply. He never did like Hatch anyway. "It's one of those things that don't do any good in the newspapers, so I'll not let this one get there."

Hatch yawned to show that he had no further interest in the matter, and went out. But there was the germ of an idea in his head which would have startled Detective Mallory, and he paced up and down outside to develop it. A girl missing! A red-headed girl missing! A red-headed girl missing

since Thursday! Thursday was the night of the Randolph masked ball! The missing Girl of the West was red-headed! Mallory had seemed astonished when he learned the name of the person who reported this last case! Therefore the person who reported it was high up—perhaps! Certainly high enough up to ask and receive the courtesy of police suppression! Her name was Dorothy Meredith!

Hatch stood still for a long time on the kerb and figured it out. Suddenly he rushed off to a telephone and called up Steven Randolph at Seven Oaks. He asked the first question with trepidation.

"Mr. Randolph, can you give me the address of Miss Dorothy Meredith?"

"Miss Meredith?" came the answer. "Let's see. I think she is stopping with the Morgan Greytons at their suburban place."

The reporter gulped down a shout. "Worked, by Jove!" he exclaimed to himself. Then, in a deadly, forced calm:—

"She attended the masked ball on Thursday evening, didn't she?"

"Well, she was invited."

"You didn't see her there?"

"No. Who are you?"

Then Hatch hung up the receiver. He was nearly choking with excitement, for in addition to all those virtues which have been enumerated he possessed, too, the quality of enthusiasm. It was no part of his purpose to tell anybody anything. Mallory didn't know, he was confident, anything of the girl having been a possible guest at the ball. And what Mallory didn't know now wouldn't be found out, all of which was a sad reflection upon the detective.

In this frame of mind Hatch started for the suburban place of the Greytons. He found the house without difficulty. Morgan Greyton was an aged gentleman of wealth and exclusive ideas—and wasn't in. Hatch handed a card, bearing only his name, to a maid, and after a few minutes Mrs. Greyton appeared. She was a motherly, sweet-faced old lady of seventy, with that grave, exquisite courtesy which makes mere man feel ashamed of himself. Hatch had that feeling when he looked at her and thought of what he was going to ask.

"I came up direct from police headquarters," he explained, diplomatically, "to learn any details you may be able to give us as to the disappearance of Miss Meredith."

"Oh, yes," replied Mrs. Greyton. "My husband said he was going to ask the police to look into the matter. It is most mysterious—most mysterious. We can't imagine where Dollie is, unless she has eloped. Do you know, that idea keeps coming to me and won't go away?"

She spoke as if it were a naughty child.

"If you'll tell me something about Miss Meredith—who she is and all that?" Hatch suggested.

"Oh, yes, to be sure!" she exclaimed. "Dollie is a distant cousin of my husband's sister's husband," she explained, precisely. "She lives in Birmingham, but is visiting us. She has been here for several weeks. She's a dear, sweet girl, but I'm afraid—afraid she has eloped."

The aged voice quivered a little, and Hatch was more ashamed of himself than ever.

"Some time ago she met a man named Herbert—Richard Herbert, I think, and——"

"Dick Herbert?" the reporter exclaimed, suddenly.

"Do you know the young gentleman?" inquired the old lady, eagerly.

"Yes; it just happens that we were undergraduates together at Oxford," said the reporter.

"And is he a nice young man?"

"A good, clean-cut, straightforward, decent man," replied Hatch. He could speak with a certain enthusiasm about Dick Herbert. "Go on, please," he urged.

"Well, for some reason I don't know, Dollie's father objects to Mr. Herbert's attentions to her—as a matter of fact, he has absolutely prohibited them; but she's a young, headstrong girl, and I fear that while she had outwardly yielded to her father's wishes she had clandestinely kept up a correspondence with Mr. Herbert. Last Thursday evening she went out unattended, and since then we have not heard from her—not a word. We can only surmise, my husband and I, that they have eloped. I know her father and mother will be heart-broken, but I have always noticed that if a girl sets her heart on a man she will get him. And perhaps it's just as well that she *has* eloped now, since you assure me he is a nice young man."

Hatch was choking back a question that rose in his throat. He hated to ask it, because he felt that this dear, garrulous old woman would have hated him for it if she could have known its purpose. But at last it came.

"Do you happen to know," he asked, "if Miss Meredith attended the Randolph ball at Seven Oaks on Thursday evening?"

"I dare say she received an invitation," was the reply. "She receives many invitations;

but I don't think she went there. It was a costume affair, I suppose?"

The reporter nodded.

"Well, I hardly think she went there, then," Mrs. Greyton replied. "She has had no costume of any sort made. No, I am positive she has eloped with Mr. Herbert; but I should like to hear from her, to satisfy myself and explain to her parents. We did not permit Mr. Herbert to come here, and it will be very hard to explain."

Hatch heard the slight rustle of a skirt in the hall, and glanced towards the door. No one appeared, and he turned back to Mrs. Greyton.

"I don't suppose it possible that Miss Meredith has returned to Birmingham?" he asked.

"Oh, no," was the positive reply. "Her father there telegraphed to her to-day—I opened it—saying he would be here probably to-night, and I — I haven't the heart to tell him the truth when he arrives. Somehow I have been hoping that we should hear, and—and——"

Then Hatch took his shame in his hand and excused himself. The maid attended him to the door.

"How much is it worth to you to know whether Miss Meredith really went to the masked ball?" asked the maid, cautiously.

"Eavesdropping, eh?" asked Hatch, in disgust.

The maid shrugged her shoulders.

"How much is it worth?" she repeated.

Hatch extended his hand. She took a sovereign which lay there and secreted it in some remote recess of her attire.

"Miss Meredith did go to the ball," she said. "She went there to meet Mr. Herbert. They had arranged to elope from there, and she had made all her plans. I was in her confidence, and assisted her."

"What did she wear?" asked Hatch, eagerly.

"Her costume was that of a Western Girl," the maid responded. "She wore a sombrero, and carried a bowie-knife and revolver."

Hatch nearly choked with astonishment.

"HATCH EXTENDED HIS HAND. SHE TOOK A SOVEREIGN WHICH LAY THERE."

V.

HATCH started back to the city with his brain full of seven-column head-lines. He thoughtfully lighted a cigar just before he stepped into the tram-car.

"No smoking!" said the conductor.

The reporter stared at him with dull eyes, and went in and sat down with the cigar in his mouth.

"No smoking, I told you!" bawled the conductor.

"Certainly not," exclaimed Hatch, indignantly. He turned and glared at the only other occupant of the car, a little girl. She wasn't smoking. Then he looked at the conductor and awoke suddenly.

"Miss Meredith is the girl," Hatch was thinking. "Mallory doesn't even dream it, and never will. He won't send a man out there to do what I did. The Greytons are anxious to keep it quiet, and they won't say anything to anybody else until they know what really happened. I've got it bottled up, and don't know how to pull the cork. Now the question is, what possible connection can there be between Dorothy Meredith and the Burglar? Was Dick Herbert the Burglar? Why, of course not. Then what?"

Pondering all these things deeply, Hatch left the car and ran up to see Dick Herbert. He was too self-absorbed to notice that the blinds of the house were drawn and there

was a general appearance of its being unoccupied. He rang, and after a long time a man-servant answered the bell.

"Mr. Herbert here?" Hatch asked.

"Yes, sir, he's here," replied the servant; "but I don't know if he can see you. He is not very well, sir."

"Not very well?" Hatch repeated.

"No; it's not that he's ill, sir. He was hurt, and——"

"Who is it, Blair?" came Herbert's voice from the top of the stair.

"Mr. Hatch, sir."

"Come up, Hatch!" Dick called, cordially. "Glad to see you. Lord, I'm so lonesome here I don't know what to do with myself."

The reporter ran up the stairs and into Dick's room.

"Not that one," Dick smiled, as Hatch reached for his right hand. "It's out of business. Try this one," and he offered his left.

"What's the matter?" Hatch inquired.

"Little hurt, that's all," said Dick. "Sit down. I got it knocked out the other night, and I've been here in this big house alone with Blair ever since. The doctor told me not to venture out yet. It has been lonesome, too. All the folks are away and took the other servants with them. How are you?"

Hatch sat down and stared at Dick thoughtfully. Herbert was a good-looking, forceful person of twenty-eight or thirty. Now he seemed a little washed out, and there was a sort of pallor beneath the natural tan. He was a young man of family unburdened by superlative wealth, but possessing in his own person the primary elements of success. He looked what Hatch had said of him—a "good, clean-cut, straightforward, decent man."

"I came up here to say something to you in my professional capacity," the reporter began at last, "and, frankly, I don't know how to say it."

Dick straightened up in his chair with a startled expression on his face. He didn't speak, but there was something in his eyes which interested Hatch immensely.

"Have you been reading the papers?" the reporter asked. "That is, during the last couple of days?"

"Yes."

"Of course, then, you've seen the stories about the Randolph robbery?"

Dick smiled a little.

"Yes," he said. "Clever, wasn't it?"

"It was," Hatch responded, enthusiastically. "It was." He was silent for a moment as he accepted and lighted a cigarette. "It doesn't happen," he went on, "that by any possible chance you know anything about it, does it?"

"Not beyond what I saw in the papers. Why?"

"I'll be frank and ask you some questions, Dick," Hatch resumed, in a tone which betrayed his discomfort. "Remember I am here in my official capacity—that is, not as a friend of yours, but as a reporter. You need not answer the questions if you don't want to."

Dick arose with a little agitation in his manner, and went over and stood beside the window.

"What is it all about?" he demanded. "What are the questions?"

"Do you know where Miss Dorothy Meredith is?"

Dick turned suddenly and glared at him with a certain lowering of his eyebrows which Hatch knew from their football days.

"What about her?" he asked.

"Where is she?" Hatch insisted.

"At home, so far as I know. Why?"

"She is not there," the reporter informed him, "and the Greytons believe that you eloped with her."

"Eloped with her?" Dick repeated. "She is not at home?"

"No. She's been missing since Thursday evening—the evening of the Randolph affair. Mr. Greyton has asked the police to look for her and they are doing so now, but quietly. It is not known to the newspapers—that is, to other newspapers. Your name has not been mentioned to the police. Now, isn't it a fact that you did intend to elope with her on Thursday evening?"

Dick strode feverishly across the room several times, then stopped in front of Hatch's chair.

"This isn't any silly joke?" he asked, fiercely.

"Isn't it a fact that you did intend to elope with her on Thursday evening?" the reporter went on, steadily.

"I won't answer that question."

"Did you get an invitation to the Randolph ball?"

"Yes."

"Did you go?"

Dick was staring straight down into his eyes.

"I won't answer that either," he said, after a pause.

"Where were you on the evening of the masked ball?"

"Nor will I answer that."

When the newspaper instinct is fully aroused a reporter has no friends. Hatch had forgotten that he ever knew Dick Herbert. To him now the young man was merely a thing from which he might wring certain information for the benefit of the palpitating public.

"Did the injury to your arm," he went on, after the approved manner of attorney for the prosecution, "prevent you from going to the ball?"

"I won't answer that."

"What is the nature of the injury?"

"Now, see here, Hatch," Dick burst out, and there was a dangerous undertone in his manner, "I shall not answer any more questions—particularly that last one—unless I know what this is all about. Several things happened on the evening of the masked ball that I can't go over with you or anyone else, but so far as my having any personal knowledge of events at the masked ball—well, you and I are not talking of the same thing at all."

He paused, started to say something else, then changed his mind, and was silent.

"Was it a pistol-shot?" Hatch went on, calmly.

Dick's lips were compressed to a thin line as he looked at the reporter, and he controlled himself only by an effort.

"Where did you get that idea?" he demanded.

Hatch would have hesitated a long time before he told him where he got that idea, but vaguely it had some connection with the fact that at least two shots were fired at the Burglar and the Girl when they raced away from Seven Oaks.

While the reporter was rummaging through his mind for an answer to the question there came a rap at the door, and Blair appeared with a card. He handed it to Dick, who glanced at it, looked a little surprised, then nodded. Blair disappeared. After a moment there were footsteps on the stairs, and Steven Randolph entered.

VI.

Dick arose and offered his left hand to Mr. Randolph, who calmly ignored it, turning his gaze instead upon the reporter.

"I had hoped to find you alone," he said, frostily.

Hatch made as if to rise.

"Sit still, Hatch," Dick commanded. "Mr. Hatch is a friend of mine, Mr. Randolph. I don't know what you want to say, but whatever it is you may say it freely before him."

Hatch knew that humour in Dick. It always preceded the psychological moment when he wanted to climb down someone's throat and open an umbrella. The tone was calm, the words clearly enunciated, and the face was white—whiter than it had been before.

"I shouldn't like to——" Mr. Randolph began.

"You may say what you want to before Mr. Hatch or not at all, as you please," Dick went on, evenly.

Mr. Randolph cleared his throat twice, and waved his hands with an expression of resignation.

"Very well," he replied. "I have come to request the return of my gold plate."

Hatch leaned forward in his chair, gripping its arms fiercely. This was a question bearing broadly on a subject that he wanted to mention, but he didn't know how. Mr. Randolph apparently found it easy enough.

"What gold plate?" asked Dick, steadily.

"The eleven pieces that you, in the garb of a Burglar, took from my house last Thursday evening," said Mr. Randolph. He was quite calm.

Dick took a sudden step forward, then straightened up with flushed face. His left hand closed with a snap and the nails bit into the flesh; the fingers of the helpless right worked nervously.

But again Dick gained control of himself.

It was a sort of recognition of the fact that Mr. Randolph was fifty years old; Hatch knew it. Mr. Randolph's knowledge on the subject did not appear. Suddenly Dick laughed.

"Sit down, Mr. Randolph, and tell me about it," he suggested.

"It isn't necessary to go into details," continued Mr. Randolph, still standing. "I had not wanted to go this far in the presence of a third person, but you forced me to do it. Now, will you or will you not return the plate?"

"Would you mind telling me just what makes you think I've got it?" Dick insisted.

"It is as simple as it is conclusive," said Mr. Randolph. "You received an invitation to the masked ball. You went there in your burglar garb and handed your invitation card to my servant. He noticed you particularly and read your name on the card. He remembered that name perfectly. I was compelled to tell the story as I knew it to Detective Mallory. I did not mention your

name; my servant remembered it—had given it to me, in fact—but I forbade him to repeat it to the police. He told them something about having burned the invitation cards."

"Oh, my, wouldn't that please Mallory!" Hatch thought.

"I have not even intimated to the police that I have the least idea of your identity," Mr. Randolph went on, still standing. "I had believed that it was some prank of yours, and that the plate would be returned in due time. Certainly I could not account for your taking it under any other circumstances. My reticence, it is needless to say, was in consideration of your name and family. But now I want the plate. If it was a prank to carry out the *rôle* of the Burglar, it is time for it to end. If the fact that the matter is now in the hands of the police has frightened you into the seeming necessity of keeping the plate for the present to protect yourself, you may dismiss that. When the plate is returned to me I shall see that the police drop the matter."

"WHEN THE PLATE IS RETURNED TO ME I SHALL SEE THAT THE POLICE DROP THE MATTER."

Dick had listened with absorbed interest. Hatch looked at him from time to time, and saw only attention, not anger.

"And the Girl?" asked Dick at last. "Does it happen that you have as cleverly traced her?"

"No," Mr. Randolph replied, frankly. "I haven't the faintest idea who she is. I suppose no one knows that but you. I have no interest further than to recover the plate. I may say that I called here yesterday, Friday, and asked to see you, but was informed that you had been hurt, so went away to give you opportunity to recover somewhat."

"Thanks," said Dick, dryly. "Awfully considerate."

There was a long silence. Hatch was listening with all the multitudinous ears of a good reporter.

"Now, the plate," Mr. Randolph suggested again, impatiently. "Do you deny that you have got it?"

"I do," replied Dick, firmly.

"I was afraid you would, and believe me, Mr. Herbert, it is a mistake," said Mr. Randolph. "I will give you twenty-four hours to change your mind. If at the end of that time you see fit to return the plate I shall drop the matter and use my influence to make the police do so. If the plate is not returned I shall be compelled to turn over all the facts to the police, with your name."

"Is that all?" Dick demanded, suddenly.

"Yes, I believe so."

"Then get out of here before I——" Dick started forward, then dropped back into a chair. Mr. Randolph drew on his gloves and went out, closing the door behind him.

For a long time Dick sat there, seemingly oblivious of Hatch's presence, supporting his head with his left hand, while the right hung down loosely beside him. Hatch was inclined to be sympathetic, for, strange as it may seem, some reporters have even that human quality, although there are persons who will not believe it.

"Is there anything I can do?" Hatch asked, at last. "Anything you want to say?"

"Nothing," Dick responded, wearily. "Nothing. You may think what you like. There are, as I said, several things of which I cannot speak even if it comes to a question of—question of having to face the charge of theft in open court. I simply *can't* say anything."

"But—but——" stammered the reporter.

"Absolutely not another word," said Dick, firmly.

VII.

THOSE satellites of the Supreme Police Intelligence who had been taking the Randolph mystery to pieces to see what made it tick lined up in front of Detective Mallory in his private office at police head-quarters early on Saturday evening. They did not seem happy. The Supreme Intelligence placed his feet under his desk and glowered; that was a part of the job.

"Well, Downey?" he asked.

"I went out to Seven Oaks and got the car the Burglar left, as you instructed," reported Downey. "Then I started out to find its owner or someone who knew it. It had no number on it, so the job wasn't easy, but I found the owner all right."

Detective Mallory permitted himself to look interested.

"He lives at Merton, four miles from Seven Oaks," Downey resumed. "His name is Blake—William Blake. His car was in the shed, a hundred feet or so from his house, on Thursday evening at nine o'clock. It wasn't there on Friday morning."

"Umph!" remarked Detective Mallory.

"There is no question that Blake told me the truth," Downey went on. "To me it seems probable that the Burglar went out from the city to Merton by train, stole the car, and ran it on to Seven Oaks. That's all there seems to be in it. Blake proved ownership of the machine, and I left it with him."

The Supreme Intelligence chewed his cigar frantically.

"And the other car?" he asked.

"I have here a blood-stained cushion, the back of a seat from the car in which the Burglar and the Girl escaped," continued Downey, in a "walk-right-up-ladies-and-gentlemen" sort of voice. "I found the car this afternoon at a garage. We knew, of course, that it belonged to Nelson Sharp, a guest at the masked ball. According to the manager of the garage, the car was standing in front of his place this morning when he arrived to open the doors. The number had been removed."

Detective Mallory examined the cushion which Downey handed to him. Several dark-brown stains told the story—one of the occupants of the car had been wounded.

"Well, that's something," commented the Supreme Intelligence. "We know now that when Cunningham fired at least one of the persons in the car was hit, and we may make our search accordingly. The Burglar and the Girl probably left the car where it was found during the preceding night."

"It seems so," said Downey. "I shouldn't think they would have dared to keep it long. Cars of that size and power are too easily traced. I asked Mr. Sharp to run down and identify the car, and he did so. The stains were new."

The Supreme Intelligence digested that in silence, while his satellites studied his face, seeking some inkling of the convolutions of that marvellous mind.

"DETECTIVE MALLORY EXAMINED THE CUSHION."

"Very good, Downey," said Detective Mallory at last. "Now, Cunningham?"

"Nothing," said Cunningham, in shame and sorrow. "Nothing."

"Didn't you find anything at all about the premises?"

"Nothing," repeated Cunningham. "The Girl left no wrap at Seven Oaks. None of the servants remembers having seen her in the room where the wraps were left. I searched all around the place, and found a dent in the ground under the smoking-room window where the gold plate had been thrown, and there were what seemed to be footprints in the grass, but it was all nothing."

"We can't arrest a dent and footprints," said the Supreme Intelligence, cuttingly.

The satellites laughed sadly. It was part of the deference they owed to the Supreme Intelligence.

"And you, Blanton?" asked Mr. Mallory. "What did you do with the list of invited guests?"

"I haven't got a good start yet," responded Blanton, hopelessly. "There are three hundred and sixty names on the list. I have been able to see possibly thirty. It's worse than making a city directory. I won't be through for a month. Randolph and his wife checked off a large number of those whom they knew were there. The others I am looking up as rapidly as I can."

The detectives sat moodily thoughtful for uncounted minutes. Finally Detective Mallory broke the silence.

"There seems to be no question that any clue that might have come from either of the motor-cars is disposed of, unless it is the fact that we now know that one of the thieves was wounded. I readily see how the theft could have been committed by a man as bold as this fellow. Now we must concentrate all our efforts to running down the invited guests and learning just where they were that evening. All of you will have to get on this job and hurry with it. We know that the Burglar *did* present an invitation card with a name on it."

The detectives went their respective ways, and then Detective Mallory deigned to receive representatives of the Press, among them Hutchinson Hatch. Hatch was worried. He knew a whole lot of things, but they didn't do him any good. He could print nothing as it stood, yet he would not tell the police, because that would give it to everyone else.

"Well, gentlemen," said Detective Mallory, smilingly, when the Press filed in, "there's nothing to say. Frankly, I will tell you that we have not been able to learn anything—at least, anything that can be given out. You know, of course, about the finding of the two cars that figured in the case, and the blood-stained cushion?"

The Press nodded collectively.

"Well, that's all there is yet. My men are still at work, but I'm a little afraid the gold plate will never be found. It has probably been melted down. The cleverness of the thieves you can judge for yourselves by the manner in which they handled the cars."

And yet Hatch was not surprised when late that night police head-quarters made known the latest sensation. This was a bulletin based on a telephone message from Steven Randolph to the effect that the gold plate had been returned by carrier to Seven Oaks. This mystified the police beyond description, but official mystification was as nothing to Hatch's state of mind. He knew of the scene in Dick Herbert's room, and remembered Mr. Randolph's threat.

"Then Dick DID have the plate," he told himself.

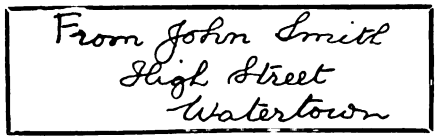
VIII.

WHOLE flocks of detectives, reporters, and newspaper artists appeared at Seven Oaks early next morning—Sunday. It had been too late to make an investigation the night before. The newspapers had only time to telephonically confirm the return of the plate. Now the investigators unanimously voiced one sentiment: "Show us."

Hatch arrived in the party headed by Detective Mallory, with Downey and Cunningham following. Blanton was off somewhere with his little list, presumably still at it. Mr. Randolph had not come down to breakfast when the investigators arrived, but had given his servant permission to exhibit the plate, the wrappings in which it had come, and the string wherewith it had been tied.

The plate had arrived in a heavy cardboard box, covered twice over with a plain piece of stiff brown paper, which had no markings save the address and the "paid" stamp of the carrier company. Detective Mallory devoted himself first to the address. It was:—

In the upper left-hand corner were scribbled the words :—



Detectives Mallory, Downey, and Cunningham studied the handwriting on the paper minutely.

"It's a man's," said Detective Downey.

"It's a woman's," said Detective Cunningham.

"It's a child's," said Detective Mallory.

"Whatever it is, it is disguised," said Hatch.

He was inclined to agree with Detective Cunningham, that it was a woman's, purposely altered, and in that event—Great Cæsar! There came that flock of seven-column head lines again. And he couldn't open the bottle.

The simple story of the arrival of the gold plate at Seven Oaks was told thrillingly by the servant.

"It was eight o'clock last night," he said. "I was standing in the hall here. Mr. and Mrs. Randolph were still at the dinner-table. They dined alone. Suddenly I heard the sound of van wheels on the road in front of the house. I listened intently. Yes, it was van wheels."

The detectives exchanged significant glances.

"I heard the van stop," the servant went on, in an awed tone. "Still I listened. Then came the sound of footsteps on the walk and then on the steps. I walked slowly along the hall toward the front door. As I did so the bell rang."

"Yes, ting-a-ling a-ling; we know. Go on," Hatch interrupted, impatiently.

"I opened the door," the servant continued. "A man stood there with a package. He was a burly fellow. 'Mr. Randolph live here?' he asked, gruffly. 'Yes,' I said. 'Here's a package for him,' said the man, 'sign here.' I took the package and signed a book he gave me, and —and ——"

"In other words," Hatch interrupted again, "a carrier brought the package here, you signed for it, and he went away?"

The servant stared at him haughtily.

"Yes, that's it," he said, coldly.

A few minutes later Mr. Randolph in person appeared. He glanced at Hatch with a little surprise in his manner, nodded curtly, then turned to the detectives. He could not add to the information the servant had given. His plate had been returned prepaid. The matter was at an end so far as he was concerned. There seemed to be no need of further investigation.

"How about the jewellery that was stolen from your other guests?" demanded Detective Mallory.

"Of course, there's that," said Mr. Randolph. "It had passed out of my mind."

"Instead of being at an end, this case has just begun," said the detective, emphatically.

Mr. Randolph seemed to have no further interest in the matter. He started out, then turned back at the door and made a slight motion to Hatch, which the reporter readily understood. As a result Hatch and Mr. Randolph were closeted together in a small room across the hall a few minutes later.

"May I ask your occupation, Mr. Hatch?" inquired Mr. Randolph.

"I'm a reporter," was the reply.

"A reporter!" Mr. Randolph seemed surprised. "Of course, when I saw you in Mr. Herbert's rooms," he went on after a little pause, "I met you only as his friend. You saw what happened there. Now, may I ask what you intend to publish about this affair?"

Hatch considered the question a moment. There seemed to be no objection to telling.

"I can't publish anything until I know everything or until the police act," he confessed, frankly. "I had been talking to Dick Herbert in a general way about this case when you arrived yesterday. I knew several things, or thought I did, that the police do not even suspect. But, of course, I can't print it yet. I can only print just what the police know and say."

"I'm glad of that—very glad of it," said Mr. Randolph. "It seems to have been a freak of some sort on Mr. Herbert's part, and, candidly, I can't understand it. Of course, he returned the plate, as I knew he would."

"Do you really believe he is the man who came here as a Burglar?" asked Hatch, curiously.

"I should not have done what you saw me do if I had not been absolutely certain," Mr. Randolph explained. "One of the things particularly that was called to my attention —I don't know that you know of it—is the fact that the Burglar had a cleft in his chin. You know, of course, that Mr. Herbert has such a cleft. Then there is the invitation card with his name. Everything together makes it conclusive."

Mr. Randolph and the reporter shook hands. Three hours later the Press and police had uncovered the Watertown part of the mystery as to how the package had been sent. It was explained by the driver of a delivery van there, and absorbed by greedy, listening ears.

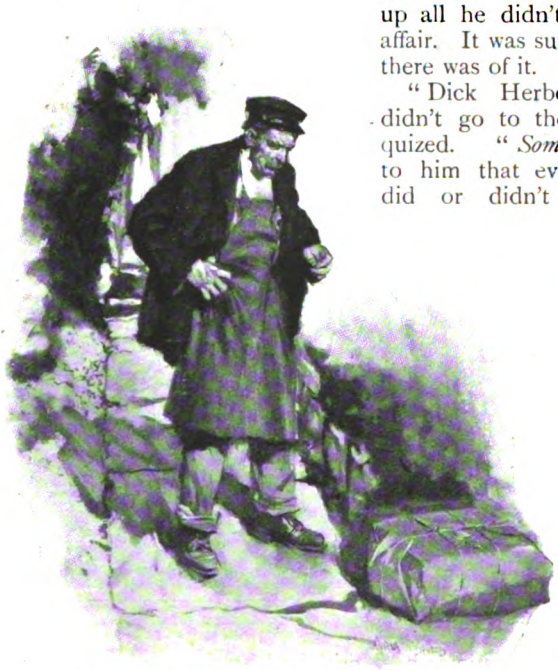
"The clerk told me to call at No. 410, High Street and get a bundle," the driver explained. "I think somebody telephoned to him to send the van. I went up there Saturday, yesterday morning. It's a small house, back a couple of hundred feet from the street, and has a stone fence around it. I opened the gate, went in, and rang the bell.

"No one answered the first ring, and I rang again. Still nobody answered, and I tried the door. It was locked. I walked around the house, thinking there might be somebody in the back, but it was all locked up. I reckoned as how the folks that had telephoned for me wasn't in, and started out to my van, intending to call again later.

"Just as I got to the gate, going out, I saw a package set down inside, hidden from the street behind the stone fence, with two half-crowns on it. I just naturally looked at it. It was the package directed to Mr. Randolph. I reasoned as how the folks who 'phoned had to go out, and left the package, so I took it away. I made out a receipt to John Smith, the name that was in the corner, and pinned it to a post, took the package and the money, and went away. That's all."

"You don't know if the package was there when you went in?" he was asked.

"I dunno; I didn't look. I couldn't help but see it when I came out, so I took it."



"IT WAS THE PACKAGE DIRECTED TO MR. RANDOLPH."

Then the investigators sought out the clerk.

"Did the person who 'phoned give you a name?" inquired Detective Mallory.

"No; I didn't ask for one."

"Was it a man or a woman talking?"

"A man," was the unhesitating reply. "He had a deep, heavy voice."

The investigators trailed away, dismally despondent, toward No. 410, High Street. It was unoccupied; inquiry showed that it had been unoccupied for months. The Supreme Intelligence picked the lock, and the investigators walked in, craning their necks. They expected at the least to find a thieves' rendezvous. There was nothing but dirt and dust and grime. Then the investigators returned to the city. They had found only that the gold plate had been returned, and they knew that when they started.

Hatch went home and sat down with his head in his hands to add up all he didn't know about the affair. It was surprising how much there was of it.

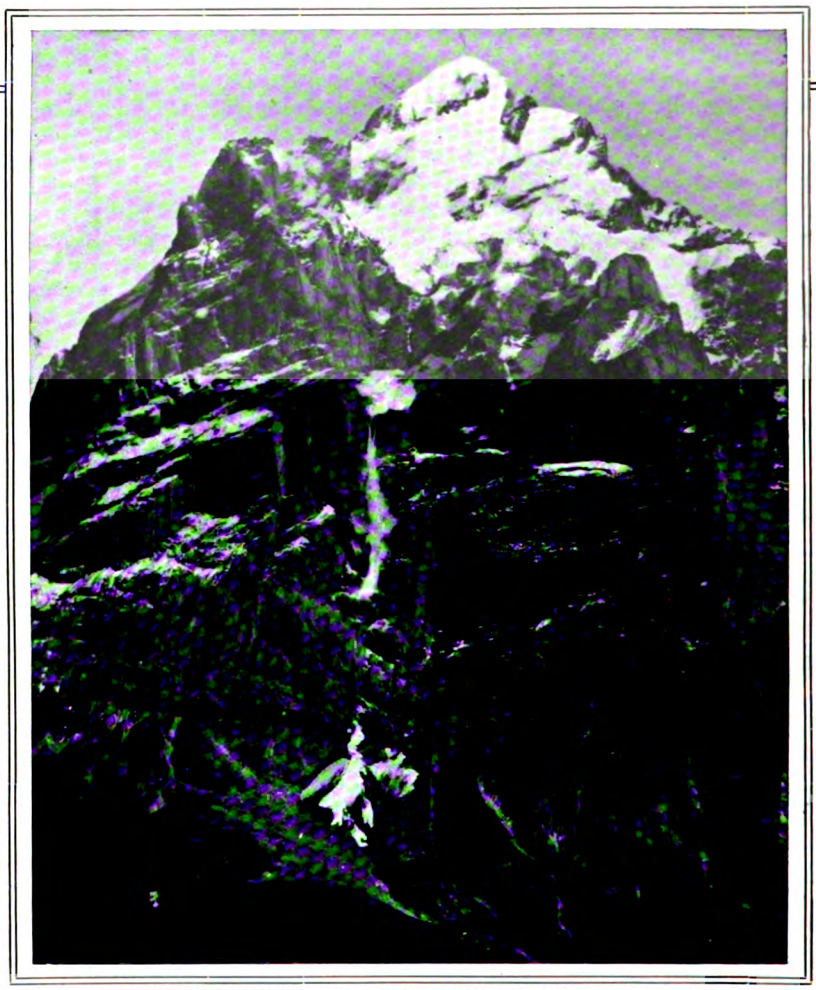
"Dick Herbert either did or didn't go to the ball," he soliloquized. "*Something* happened to him that evening. He either did or didn't steal the gold plate, and every circumstance indicates that he did—which, of course, he didn't. Dorothy Meredith either was or was not at the ball. The maid's statement shows that she was, yet no one there recognised her, indicating that she wasn't. She either did or didn't run away with somebody in a motor-car. Anyhow, something happened to *her*, because she's missing. The gold plate was stolen, and the gold plate is back. *I know that*, thank the Lord! And now, knowing more about this affair than any other single individual, I don't know *anything*."

(To be continued.)

TALES OF A MOUNTAIN CLIMBER.

By MRS. AUBREY LE BLOND.

Author of "My Home in the Alps," "True Tales of Mountain Adventure," etc.



From a Photo.] THE WETTERHORN—IN THE CENTRE CAN BE SEEN AN AVALANCHE FALLING. [*by the Author.*

I HAVE sometimes been criticised for dwelling overmuch on the tragical side of Alpine climbing, and perhaps with some reason. Yet if anything I have written deters a would-be mountaineer from testing his skill and strength against the difficulties of a lofty peak, then I care not, for surely he is not of the stuff from which the true climber is made. On the other hand, if I recall the many stirring tales of pluck, endurance, self-sacrifice—nay, of folly also—I am helping in a small way the non-climber to understand something of the fascination of mountaineering; while should the eternal snows beguile him to visit them, I am sounding a note of warning which may ring in his ears when he feels tempted to venture beyond the bounds of prudence.

Every disaster on the mountains, if properly understood, should teach a lesson, and if in a few cases a catastrophe was unavoidable, its very rarity should convince us that the sport may be a comparatively safe one if we will only make it so.

We owe it to our guides, to our friends, to ourselves, to the noble mountains we ascend, "for the lessons they can teach and the happiness they can bring, to do nothing that can discredit our manly pursuit, or bring down the ridicule of the undiscerning upon the noblest pastime in the world."

An immense number of Alpine disasters have happened because the leader has not understood the condition of the snow. It is only the very best men—one might almost say the born mountaineers—who can, after thrusting their axes into a slope of snow, declare positively that an avalanche may, or need not, be feared. It is more a question of the consistency than of the mere softness of the snow, and attention must be also paid to the surface beneath, the degree with which the overlying snow adheres to it, and the general angle of the slope. A deep layer of soft snow on a frozen surface is obviously in an unstable condition, and even if thickly crusted is liable to split up and form an avalanche. But the most dangerous snow of all is new snow exposed to hot sun, or, worse still, to warm winds, and safety can only be found in retreat when such a state of things is met with.

"THE MOST DANGEROUS SNOW OF ALL IS NEW SNOW EXPOSED TO HOT SUN, OR, WORSE STILL, TO WARM WINDS."
From a Photo. by the Author.

An example—alas! it is but one amongst many—of a catastrophe due to venturing on a mountain too soon after a heavy fall of snow occurred on the Wetterhorn in 1902, when a Scotch gentleman and his guide, Knubel, lost their lives. The Knubel family have been particularly unfortunate on the mountains, for three of the brothers Knubel, killed by the breaking of the cornice on the Lyskamm, lie in the little churchyard of St. Nicholas.

The party on the Wetterhorn, in addition to Mr. Brown and Knubel, included another amateur, Mr. Garden, and a young guide, Imboden by name, though no relation to the famous Joseph Imboden. Mr. Garden had done some climbing in Switzerland the previous season, but Mr. Brown seems to have had no acquaintance with mountains beyond some scrambling on Scotch hills.

They left the hut where it is usual to sleep for the Wetterhorn at 2 a.m., and at that early hour the deep snow in the *couloirs* or gulleys between the rocky buttresses of the mountain was frozen together sufficiently to render it quite safe, though as time went on and the sun's warmth began to make itself felt the work became more and more laborious. However, they reached the summit at length, but on the descent they began to realize that the steeper portions of the snow-slopes were becoming most unsafe.

The snow in the *couloirs* grew worse and worse, and they were anxious to get to safer ground as quickly as possible, fearing that at any moment an avalanche might start beneath their feet, or rush down on them from above and overwhelm them.

And presently it came!

Knubel was the first to perceive it, and he had barely time to shout to his companions before it was upon them! They were instantly swept off their feet and dashed down the *couloir*. Those who have never witnessed the fall of a large avalanche can have little idea of its terrible power. People carried away in it are quite unable to help themselves. They are borne along like straws in a mighty torrent, and dashed against rocks till they are dazed or senseless. They are half suffocated in the blinding, whirling mass, and oftentimes buried deep below it when at last it pauses. For more than twelve hundred feet the four helpless

men were hurled down the precipitous gulley, and then, while they were still on the surface of the snow, it came to rest. Mr. Garden was the first to recover his senses, and he immediately tried to rouse his friend. He shook him, he rubbed him, he spoke to him—all in vain; he was beyond human aid. He then turned his attention to Knubel, who was gasping and breathless, and he endeavoured to pour some wine down his throat. His attempt failed, and in a few minutes the poor guide had passed away. Mr. Garden's only living companion now was Imboden, who, in an access of delirium, lay in the very track of the avalanche. Mr. Garden tried to move him to a safe place, but had not enough strength, and barely managed to crawl to some neighbouring rocks. He knew now that his only hope lay in trying to gain the attention of any other climbers who might be in the neighbourhood, so he shouted as loud and as often as he could.

Truly the situation was a most desperate one, but by a more than fortunate chance help was not far off. Another climber, with one guide, had been up the Wetterhorn from the Rosenlaui side, and they were now on their way down to Grindelwald. They saw the injured men, and within an hour were by their sides. Their first care was to carry Imboden out of danger, and then they hurried down for assistance. So Mr. Garden was left on the mountain side "alone with his two dead companions and with poor Imboden, who was quite off his head, alone for hour after hour—from 2 to 10 p.m.," wrote the Rev. Canon McCormick in his eloquent letter to the *Times*. "Presently hail pelted furiously. The cold was intense. The moonlight tried to struggle through the darkness, but receded again immediately. No sound broke the solitude, except the piteous wailings of the half-demented Imboden. The lightning flashed and made everything look ghastly.

"Succour came at length. Guides carried the living and the dead, with a skill and tenderness which always characterize them. From the hut Mr. Garden walked, supported on either side by guides."

This accident was not the first of its kind which has happened on the Wetterhorn, when its ascent has been undertaken too soon after fresh snow.

Hardly had Grindelwald shaken off the gloom cast over the place by this sad event than people were horrified to learn tidings of an even more terrible catastrophe, from which not a single survivor returned to tell the tale.

On Tuesday, August 19th, 1902, two guides, who had only that very morning joined in the procession to the train by which Mr. Brown's body left for England, started with their employers, the brothers Fearon, for the hut on the Wetterhorn. Their names were Bravand and Bohren, and they had every reason to expect a safe and easy ascent. A thunderstorm came on in the night, but it cleared off in time for a start, and they duly reached the top.

That they actually gained the summit was proved beyond dispute, for when, on finding they did not return, a search-party ascended the mountain, an extraordinary sight met their gaze. The snow was trampled and marked, the cornice was notched where the Messrs. Fearon and their guides had crawled through, but on the narrow summit-ridge remained nothing except a pathetic yet silent witness to the swift and awful fate which had overtaken the four climbers.

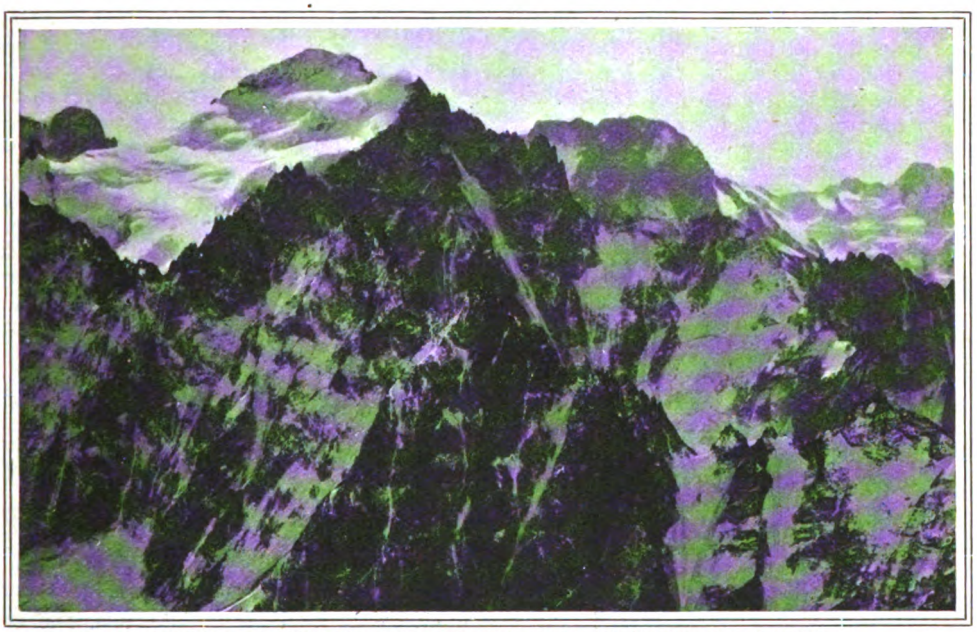
What must the searchers have felt when they discerned, stuck upright in the snow on the very topmost point, an ice-axe, split and scorched by lightning?

The bodies of the Rev. Robert Fearon and Bravand were found about forty-eight hours after the accident, not far below the top, still roped together and balancing the weight of each other on either side of a rib of rock. It was, however, not till September 22nd that the remaining two bodies were discovered, about twenty-five yards above the spot where the avalanche had overwhelmed the former party. They had been thickly covered with snow, and were thus hidden for a long time from the indefatigable searchers, whose untiring efforts, even in bad weather, had kept Grindelwald in a constant state of alarm lest another catastrophe should result.

A more terrible series of disasters than those which overtook three French climbers and their two guides on the Ecrins in 1900 it is difficult to imagine. The Ecrins is familiar even to non-climbers through the magnificent description of its first ascent given in Mr. Whymper's "Scrambles in the Alps." The French party went up from the Refuge Tuckett by the north side and the so-called "Couloir Whymper." At one o'clock, when they left the summit, the weather began to cloud over, and at three in the afternoon they found themselves enveloped in a blinding snowstorm. They were now not far from the *Bergschrund*, or crevasse which separated them from the easy snow-slopes below. This crevasse, by reason of its width, is sometimes

very awkward to cross, and on this occasion seems to have been bridged over at one spot only. Owing to the thickly falling snow the party was quite unable to hit off the bridge, and wandered about for a considerable time in search of it. All were now drenched to the skin and in a pitiable condition. As fast as the leading guide cut steps they were filled up with snow, so that the travellers, who do not appear to have been mountaineers of any great experience, had much difficulty in keeping their footing. At last one of them, M. Mestrallet, slipped and fell, dragging the rest after him. One of the guides, Pierre Estienne, broke three ribs, again with it to his brother. When he reached his companions he found all three already dead, so he once more descended, and after falling several times into crevasses, from which he most fortunately managed in each case to scramble out again, he joined Lambert at the Refuge Tuckett. Lambert, too, had fallen into a crevasse during his solitary passage of the snow-fields, but had also contrived to escape. The bodies of the rest of the party were shortly afterwards recovered.

Without fuller information it is difficult to say positively that this accident should not have happened, but as a climber of more



THE ECRINS, SHOWING THE GREAT SNOW-FIELD WHERE THE FRENCH PARTY PERISHED.
From a Photo. by the Author.

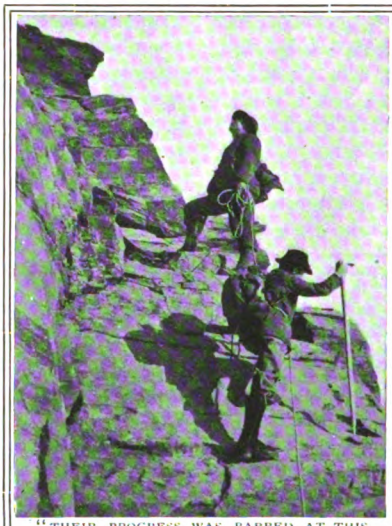
otherwise the party sustained no injuries beyond bruises.

The night now quickly closed in, and the storm grew more and more violent. The miserable climbers, wet through, utterly worn out, and with hardly any food, remained where they were till daylight. The injured guide suffered much pain, and M. Thore (one of the tourists) was by morning at the point of death. A plucky attempt was made by the guide Eugene Estienne and M. Lambert to carry down Pierre and M. Mestrallet, but they could not manage it, so started off to fetch help. When they got as far as the rocks near the Col des Ecrins, where they had left a bag of provisions on the ascent, Eugene took it on his back and started up

than twenty years' experience myself I cannot help suspecting that the travellers were unfit to undertake so arduous an expedition, especially when the proportion of only two guides to three amateurs is remembered. Seasoned mountaineers have spent nights out above the snow-line under conditions as bad as those described above, and have not been any the worse. In fact, I am unable to recall a single instance of a member of a strong, properly-equipped party perishing on the Alps from exposure. Therefore the lesson this sad tale may teach is the old one of always keeping something in reserve, and of never venturing on an important expedition --or a minor one either, for that matter— either under-guided, under-trained, under-fed,

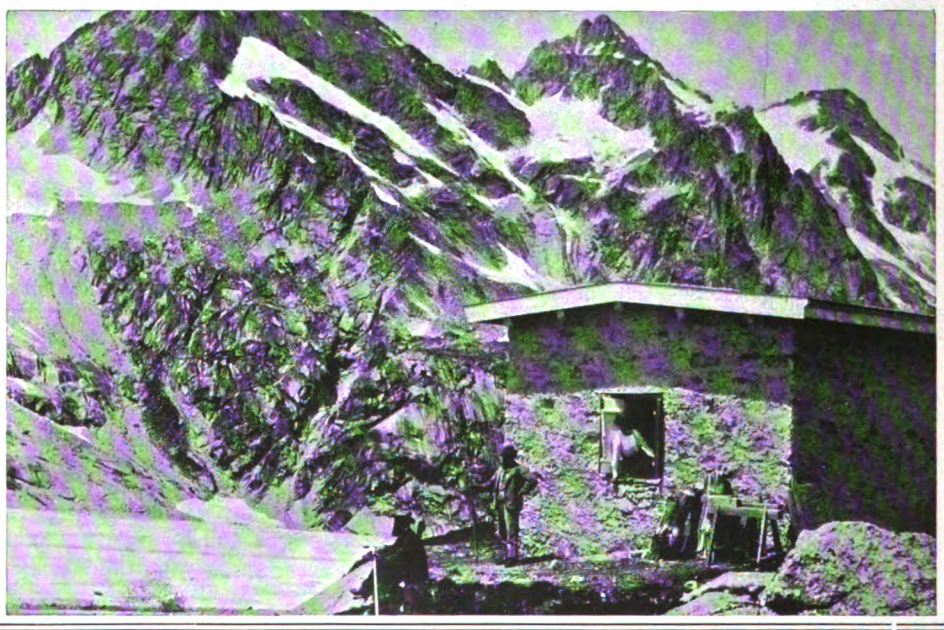
or improperly clothed. To have in hand sufficient skill and strength for a spurt, if overtaken by bad weather, is most essential, and has, I think, hardly as yet been justly valued in mountaineering literature.

What shall be said in the case of an amateur, of poor health and little experience, who takes his son, a lad of thirteen, and another young man of seventeen on the exploration of a hitherto untrodden route up an Alpine peak? It is intensely painful to criticise the actions of those who have paid the penalty of their mistakes with their lives, but it would be wrong to pass over such errors in silence, lest the non-climber imagine that the fatal consequences were not such as a skilled mountaineer might easily have foreseen. I had known Mr. Way for several years, and always looked upon him as an invalid spending his winters in the Engadine for the benefit of his health. I never imagined his strength would permit him to climb, but it is evident that the fascination of the sport led him to undertake some expeditions during the summer of 1900.



"THEIR PROGRESS WAS BARRED AT THIS POINT BY A HARD BIT OF ROCK."
From a Photo. by the Author.

The narrative from which I condense the following account was written for the *Alpine Journal* by the survivor, Mr. Stuart de la Rue, a young man of seventeen. The object of the excursion was to explore an untried route up the Cima di Rossi, a fine glacier-clad peak near the head of the Forno Glacier, in the Maloja district. Mr. Way, his son of thirteen, and Mr. de la Rue, without guides, had spent the previous night at the Forno hut. They started at 6.30 a.m., and took with them two short ropes instead of one long one. After they had climbed for about two hours and a half the rocks became very steep and difficult. They did not return, however, having determined to try to reach the summit. Mr. Way was leading, his son was second, and Mr. de la Rue last. Their progress was barred at this point by a hard bit of rock,



From a Photo.] THE FORNO HUT, WHERE MR. WAY SPENT THE NIGHT BEFORE HE WAS KILLED. *[by the Author.*

and in order to get up this *mauvais pas* before the other two advanced, Mr. Way required a longer allowance of rope. He proposed, therefore, that Mr. de la Rue should unrope the boy, join the two ends of the rope, and let Mr. Way advance to a secure position. This was done, and the two ends joined with a reef knot. The rope was now paid out, Mr. de la Rue holding the end till Mr. Way was about forty feet above the two others. He called to those below that the rock was loose and rotten. Mr. de la Rue replied that he must beware of a slip, as if it occurred he could not hold him. At that very instant a large rock detached itself and came crashing down. It just escaped Mr. de la Rue, but started a regular avalanche of stones The boy, unroped, was standing to the right. As he realized the awful disaster about to occur, he cried, "Oh, my God!" These were the poor child's last words, and an instant later he was swept away.

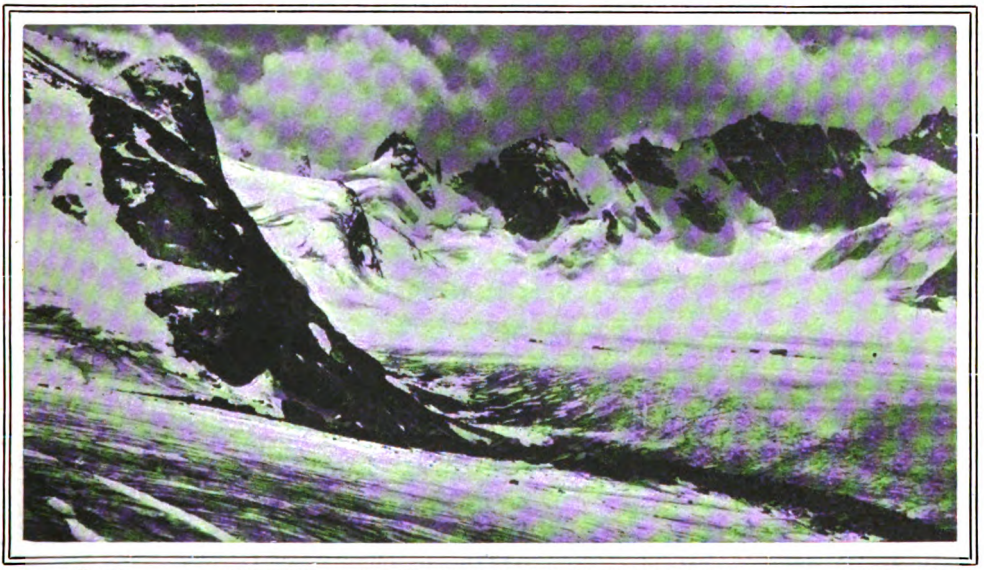
A moment after the fall of stones Mr. Way fell from his ledge above. Mr. de la Rue succeeded in holding the rope, and trusted that, after all, he might have managed to save his companion, but what was his horror, when the cloud of dust cleared off, to find that he had only a loose end in his hand!

The knot had given way.

Hurrying down as rapidly as the difficult ground allowed, he discovered the lifeless body of the boy about five hundred to eight hundred feet below. Mr. Way could not be found, though the young man followed the course of the avalanche for some distance, as far as it was practicable. A search-party, however, managed to recover the body that night.

Mr. de la Rue had great trouble in getting down, slipping several times and finally falling into the *Bergschrund*. From this, though he had lost his axe, he managed to escape, and got to the Cavloccio lake at about 1.30. His account of the catastrophe bears the impress of accuracy in its modest wording, and one cannot feel that blame can attach to one so obviously inexperienced for joining in so unwise an expedition.

There have been at least two deaths in the High Alps directly due to an over-confidence that has led to the discarding of the rope while still on difficult ground. Now, if a man chooses to go absolutely alone on great snow-covered peaks, it is no worse—and no better—than any other form of attempted suicide. But from the moment that he climbs with friends or guides he is absolutely bound to do his best to avoid not only the risks that all must share alike, but also any special risk he alone might run if he unroped and thus exposed himself to greater danger than his companions. Imagine the feelings of guides and comrades who see a fellow-climber slip and are utterly unable to check him! Imagine their state of mind when they descend and meet the friends of the victim, or even when the matter is referred to merely by strangers!



From a Photo.] THE CLIFFS OF THE CIMA DI ROSSI, FROM WHICH MR. WAY FELL. *[by the Author.*

If the dead man was a good climber—as he was in both the cases referred to—his companions have not liked to do more than earnestly remonstrate when he insisted on unroping from them. Yet, ever after, they must be haunted by the thought, "I *might*, perhaps, have prevented it!" I do not hesitate to say that anyone who, because he finds the rope a little irksome and fancies he is quite safe without it, discards it, and causes those who are with him anxiety at the time and infinite sorrow afterwards if anything goes wrong, is both thoughtless and selfish, and I feel sure that, though the man who would do it may be a good gymnast, he is a bad mountaineer.

When, many years ago, Dr. Mosley slipped on the slabs not far above the old Matterhorn hut, and fell two thousand feet down the tremendous eastern face of the mountain, what must have been the shock to those who were with him? His friend had urged him to keep on the rope, at least till he got to the hut. The guide had offered help, and placed his axe in position to afford foothold at the critical moment, but, secure in an ill-founded belief in his own powers, the poor man tried to vault over the slippery rock, lost his balance, and fell! But let us not judge him hardly. A finer climber than he, a guide of infinite experience, one of the best mountaineers the world has seen, lost his life under very similar conditions. When Emile Rey had brought his party in safety to the foot of the Dent du Géant—for him a mere bagatelle—it probably occurred to no one to protest when he cast off the rope and sprang down the *couloir*. Yet, in alighting, he slipped, was unable to recover himself, and fell instantly to his death! We may theorize all we will, but the disaster was too amazing for words. Let us simply take it as one more lesson of the need of caution wherever a fall could be hurtful, no matter how unlikely a fall may seem.

What could have appeared more improbable than that a gentleman, who with his two guides had made a successful ascent of Piz Bernina by a difficult route and in bad weather, should be killed the same evening on his return from the hut? Between the hut and the Morteratsch restaurant, where the driving road begins, there is a good path. In fact, cows are often taken along it in summer on their way to the mountain pastures. Yet while passing along this path at night, with a guide in front and another behind, each carrying a lantern, the traveller, no doubt stepping on a stone slippery with the snow which had fallen that day, overbalanced and

THE PIZ BERNINA, SHOWING THE WHOLE ROUTE TRAVERSED BY A PARTY, ONE MEMBER OF WHICH WAS KILLED AFTER GAINING THE EASY FOOTPATH.
From a Photo. [*by the Author.*

fell at just the one spot where a little precipice rendered a fall dangerous! A more unexpected disaster could not be imagined. Let it be again a reminder to be on the watch even when all difficulty is long since done with.

The terrible accident to the Rev. Julius M. Elliott on the Schreckhorn was a catastrophe which should never have happened. "If only those who are quite blameless should cast the first stone," wrote the editor of the *Alpine Journal*, "few would be entitled to find fault with him." True enough. Yet it is just because we have done what we ought not to have done ourselves that climbers who have escaped when they did not deserve to come off scot-free would fain speak out and deter others from imitating them.

From a Photo.] "THE PEAK OF TERROR" WHERE MR. ELLIOTT LOST HIS LIFE. [*by the Author.*

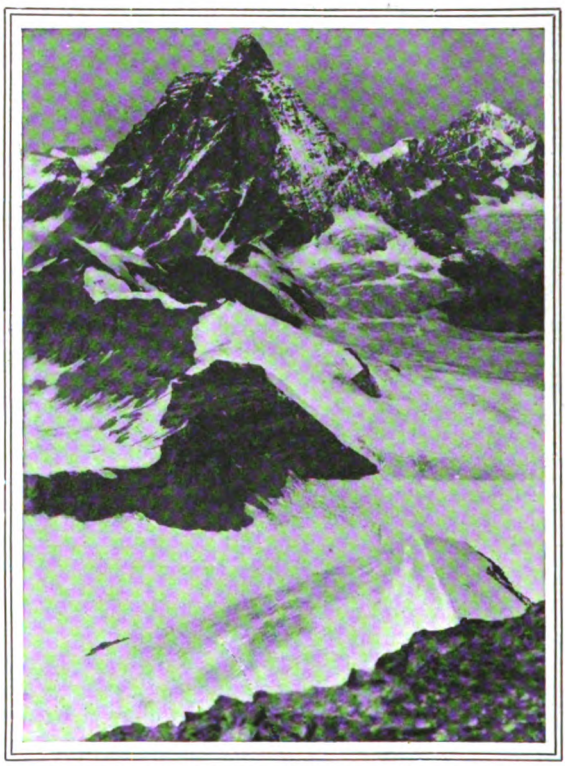
Mr. Elliott was making an ascent of the far-famed "Peak of Terror" (or Schreckhorn) with two guides, and had reached the last ridge of the mountain. He had declined to be roped, as he considered it irksome, and felt entire confidence that he would not slip. As he was a climber of several years' experience, and his guide had been with him for the past four seasons, the cord was not insisted on. Presently Mr. Elliott, in order to reach the rock-ridge from the snow, made a sort of spring. The spot is not a difficult one; I spent some time when I passed over it myself in noting the surroundings, while my guides described the accident to me. But Mr. Elliott missed his footing, and, though a plucky attempt was made by one of his guides to arrest him by grasping his sleeve, he slipped from Biner's hold and glided rapidly down the steep and frozen snow-slopes till he disappeared from sight.

I suppose all English-speaking, educated people have read Whymper's famous work on his "Scrambles in the Alps." The name of that brave and determined guide, Jean Antoine Carrel, is therefore a familiar one; but the closing chapter in the life of this pioneer of the mountains is probably less known to the general reader than is the story of his plucky attempts on the Matterhorn. Indeed, Carrel looked on the Italian side of the Matterhorn almost as his own property. It was a touching and appropriate end to his career that he should die on his own mountain, within sight of his home, after the work of the day was done, and in the performance of an act of the greatest heroism.

Carrel was sixty-two when he set out for the last time to climb his beloved peak. He was engaged to an Italian gentleman, Signor Sinigaglia, who himself has retold to me the story of his sad yet glorious end. The second guide was Charles Gorret, and the party started from Breuil at 2.15 a.m., intending to cross the Matterhorn and sleep at the hut on the Swiss side that night. The weather, however, becoming somewhat overcast, and delay having been occasioned by

ice-glazed rocks, they decided to remain at the hut at the foot of the so-called "Great Tower" till the next day. Carrel had shown signs of fatigue during the climb, but, as he seemed quite restored by a couple of hours of sound sleep on his arrival at the hut, it was put down to a trifling and temporary weakness. Meanwhile the weather got worse and worse, and, far from showing any symptoms of abatement next morning, the storm continued to rage the *whole of that day and the following night!* The cold was now great, and they had nearly exhausted their food. It was therefore decided that if the wind fell at all a start should be made downwards the following morning.

The next day, though the weather was still very bad, at 9 a.m. the party set off. The work was extremely difficult, the fixed ropes nearly hidden with the fresh snow, and ice everywhere. At length they got down to the Col de Lion, where they hoped the wind would moderate a little. But here a regular hurricane set in, and the climbers were almost suffocated by it and by the driving snow. The cold was awful. Gorret already had a hand frost-bitten, and every moment they had to clear their eyes of ice, while they could barely make each other hear in the roaring tempest.



THE SOUTH FACE OF THE MATTERHORN, WHERE CARREL DIED.
From a Photo. by the Author.

Some three hours after starting Carrel was noticed to slacken his pace. Gorret inquired if anything were wrong. "Nothing," was the reply, and still the brave spirit trudged on. At length Gorret took the lead and Carrel seemed to move more easily for the rest. They were now at the spot where a short and steep downward passage would land them on the pastures where was safety. The first two were nearly at the bottom when they felt the rope tighten. They cried to Carrel to follow them down, but received no answer. Alarmed, they remounted a little, when Carrel said, in a faint voice, "Come up and fetch me; I have no strength left."

They hastened to his side. He was barely conscious, and they with great difficulty put the rest of the cognac in his mouth. They rubbed him and did all they could for him, but it was of no avail. They tried to lift him, but it was impossible. Then, stooping down, they asked in his ear if he wished to commend his spirit to God. With a last effort he said "Yes," and fell back dead on the snow.

"With broken hearts," writes Signor Sinigaglia, "we cut the rope binding us to our brave companion, and continued the descent."

"It cannot be doubted" (to quote Mr. Whymper's eloquent words) "that Carrel, enfeebled though he was, could have saved himself had he given his attention to self-preservation. He took a nobler course; and, accepting his responsibility, devoted his whole soul to the welfare of his comrades, until, utterly exhausted, he fell staggering on the snow. He was already dying. Life was flickering, yet the brave spirit said, 'It is *nothing*.'"

I cannot bring these climber's tales to a more appropriate close than by quoting the following pretty anecdote.

One day the son of Maquignaz, Carrel's great rival, was, some years after this sad event, guiding a tourist up the Italian side of the Matterhorn. As they approached the Col de Lion the gentleman said to his guide, "Show me the spot where Carrel fell." Young Maquignaz turned to him sharply, rebukingly. "Carrel did not fall. *He died.*"

"FERDIE."

By F. ANSTEY.

Author of "Vice Versa," "The Man from Blankley's," etc., etc.

I HAD better say at once that I don't set up to be literary. I get quite enough of pen and ink all day at the bank, and when I *am* free, I like to be out in the fresh air as long as I can.

So you will not expect "style" or "literary composition" or anything of that sort in this; it is just an account, as exact as I can make it, of a very unpleasant experience I had last Christmas, and you must let me tell it in my own way. If you think, as very likely you may, that I cut rather a poor figure in the course of it, all I ask is that you will kindly suspend your judgment of me till you come to the finish. Because you will see then — at least I hope you will — that I couldn't very well have behaved any differently.

"I PUT IN THIS PARTICULAR ROOT BY ITSELF, JUST UNDER THE DRAWING-ROOM WINDOW."

My name is Filleter — Lionel Alchin Filleter, if you want it in full—I am about twenty-four, and unmarried. My elder sister Louisa and I share a semi-detached villa in Woodlands Avenue, Cricklebury Park, within easy reach of the City by rail or motor-bus. Our house is called "Ullswater," and next door is "Buttermere"; why, I don't know, as neither boasts so much as a basin of gold-fish. But the name was painted on the gate when we came, and as we couldn't think of anything better, we stuck to it.

We have quite a decent back garden for the size of the house, and when there was nothing doing in the way of games, I spent most of my spare time in it. In fact, I got rather keen at last, and my bank being in the City, I used to look in as often as possible at Messrs. Protheroe and Morris's well-known auction-rooms in Cheapside, on the off-chance of picking up a bargain. Sometimes I did; in March of last year, for instance, I happened to drop in while they were selling a consignment of late Dutch and Cape bulbs and roots, and secured a bag of a hundred miscellaneous anemone roots for half a crown. The lot was described in the catalogue as "*Mixed. All fine sorts, including St. Brigid, Fulgens, etc. Believed to contain some new varieties.*"

If you have ever seen any anemone roots you will know what black, dried-up-looking things they are, so queerly shaped that one can never be sure which end up to plant them. I planted mine the day after I got them home, along my S.E. border, where they would get plenty of sun, and make a good show in front of the phloxes the following June. Or rather I planted all but one there, that one being so much larger and more fantastically shaped than the rest that I thought it might possibly turn out to be a quite unique variety, like, as I told Louisa at the time, the celebrated "Narcissus Mackintoshi Splendescens," which was bought in a mixed lot at an auction for a few shillings,

and now fetches as much as five pounds a bulb!

So I put in this particular root by itself, just under the drawing-room window, with a labelled peg to mark the spot. Louisa rather jeered at my expectations; she has very little faith in me as a gardener, and besides, she takes no proper pride in the garden itself, or she would never have persisted as she did, in letting Togo out for a run in it the last thing at night. Togo is Louisa's black dachs, and, as I understand the breed was originally trained to hunt for truffles, you could hardly expect such things as bulbs and roots to get a fair chance if there is any truth in hereditary instinct. But Louisa objected to his running about in front, because of motor-cars.

Still, I'm bound to say that he did not seem to have interfered with any of the anemones, all of which came up well—except the root I had had such hopes of, which never came up at all. And, as I couldn't fairly blame Togo for that, and Louisa seemed to have forgotten all about the subject, I didn't think it worth while to refer to it.

I soon forgot my disappointment myself, until I was clearing up my beds in November and came upon the peg. Then I decided to leave the root undisturbed, just in case it might be some variety that took a considerable time to flower. And then I forgot it once more.

Things went on as usual until it was Christmas Eve; Louisa, I remember, had been putting together our Christmas presents, among which were some toys for little Peggy and Joan Dudlow.

The Dudlows, I should mention, are far the most important and influential people in Cricklebury Park, where the local society is above the usual suburban level. They live at "Ingleholme," a handsome gabled house standing in its own grounds at the end of the Avenue. Dudlow is a well-to-do silk merchant, and his eldest daughter Violet is —but I simply can't trust myself to describe her—I know I should never get hold of just the right words. Well, Louisa had gone up to her room, leaving me alone in the drawing-room with an injunction not to sit up late.

It was getting late—very nearly twelve o'clock indeed—and I was thinking of turning in as soon as I had read another page or two of a book I was dipping into. It was a rum old book which belonged to Anthony Casbird, our curate at St. Philip's. To look at Casbird, you wouldn't believe he was bookish, being so ruddy in the face, but he has a regular library at his lodgings, and is always at me for only reading what he calls "modern trash." So, as I happened to let out that I had never heard of a writer called Sir Thomas Browne, he had insisted on lending me one of his books, with some notes of his own for a paper he was going to read at some Literary Society.

It had a jaw-breaking title: "Pseudodoxia Epidemica, or Enquiries into very many received Tenents and commonly presumed Truths," and had been published so long ago as 1646.

Now when I do take up a book, I must say I prefer something rather more up-to-date, and this was written in such an old-fashioned, long-winded way that I didn't get on with it.

But I had come to a chapter which seemed more promising, being headed, "Of sundry tenents concerning vegetables or plants, which examined, prove either false or dubious." I thought I might get a tip or two for the garden out of it.

However, it was not what I should call "practical." It began like this: "*Many mola's and false conceptions there are of Mandrakes, the first from great Antiquity, conceiveth the Roote thereof resembleth the shape of man.*" . . . and, further on, "*a Catacresticall and farre derived similitude, it holds with man; that is, in a bifurcation or division of the roote into two parts, which some are contente to call thighes. . . . The third assertion affirmeth the roots of Mandrakes doe make a noyse or give a shreeke upon eradication, which is indeed ridiculous, and false below confute; . . . The last concerneth the danger ensuing, that there followes an hazard of life to them that pull it up, that some evill fate pursues them,*" and so on.

I found a loose note of Casbird's to the effect that, to guard against this danger, a black dog was usually employed to pull up the root, which apparently was fatal to the dog; while its owners "*stopped their own eares for feare of the terrible shriek or cry of this Mandrack.*"

Somehow all this vaguely suggested something, though for a while I could not remember what. Everyone knows how worrying that is, and I could not bring myself to get out of my chair and go to bed until I had found the missing clue. And at last I hit on it. The anemone root, of course! I recollected now that Louisa, who had had a low opinion of it from the first, had remarked that it was shaped "exactly like a horrid

little man." Not that I saw much resemblance myself, though it certainly was forked, and even had excrescences on each side which, to a lively imagination, might pass for arms. But no doubt in old Sir Thomas's time a good many fairly intelligent people would have sworn it was a Mandrake, and been terrified out of their lives at it!

Now I came to think over it, I was rather hazy, even then, as to what kind of creature they supposed a Mandrake to be exactly—though I gathered that it must be some peculiarly malignant sort of little demon.

I was amusing myself by these speculations when I was startled for the moment by a succession of short sharp shrieks, ending in a prolonged and blood-curdling yell. Only for the moment, because I remembered at once that, though we are some distance from the railway line, you can hear the trains distinctly when the wind happens to be in the right quarter. At the same time I could not help fancying that the noise had seemed nearer than usual—that it sounded as if it might almost have come from my own garden.

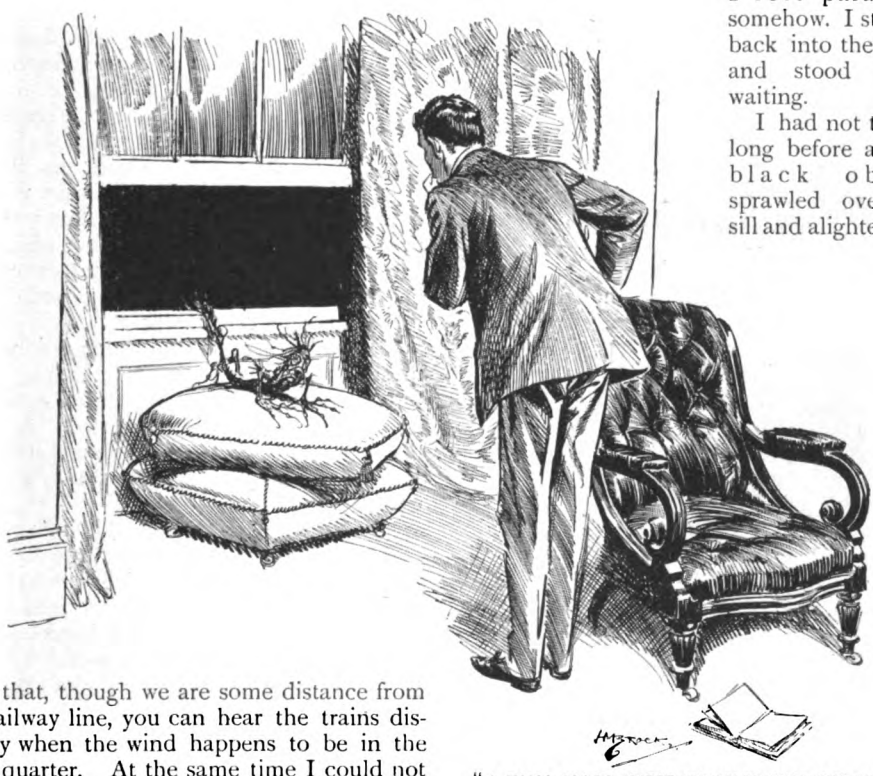
I grew so uneasy at last that I threw up the window, to see if anything had happened.

All was quiet again now; but, as my eyes became accustomed to the darkness, I thought I could make out a small black form lying motionless in the patch of light that was thrown on the grass-plot by the lamp behind me. It looked to me like Togo. Louisa must have turned him out as usual, and the servants have forgotten to let him in again, which was careless of them. He had had a fit, as had happened once before, and the screams I had heard had been his. Now I should have to go down and see after the poor brute. . . .

But I never went. For, as I stood there at the window leaning out, I heard another sound below which drove all thought of Togo completely out of my head—a stealthy rustling and scrabbling, as if some large reptile—a chameleon for choice—were clambering up the ivy towards the window.

I knew I ought to shut it before the thing, whatever it was, could get in, but I couldn't. I felt paralyzed somehow. I stepped back into the room and stood there, waiting.

I had not to wait long before a small black object sprawled over the sill and alighted with a flop on the ottoman beneath. I cannot give any idea of its appearance except by saying that it was a wizened little imp of a thing, as black as your hat, and hideously ugly. As it recovered its balance and stood there, blinking its beady little eyes in the lamplight, I noticed that its expression was not so much malignant as obsequious, and



"A SMALL BLACK OBJECT SPRAWLED OVER THE SILL AND ALIGHTED WITH A FLOP ON THE OTTOMAN BENEATH."

even abject. Though I didn't like it any the better for that. And then it spoke.

"I hope you were not alarmed by the noise," it said, in a soft reedy pipe. "It was only me."

I can't say that I was exactly surprised at hearing it speak. I did not know enough about Mandrakes for that. But it was clear enough that old Sir Thomas Browne had been wrong for once in his life, for this thing couldn't possibly be anything else but a Mandrake. I did not answer it—what *can* you say to a Mandrake?

It jumped off the ottoman as I fell back into my chair; then it swarmed up the table-leg with a horrible agility, hoisted itself over the edge, and sat down humbly on a wooden box of puzzle cubes.

"You see," it went on apologetically, "when that dog of yours dragged me out of bed so suddenly, I couldn't help calling out. I do not ask you to punish it—I wish to make no complaint—but it bit me severely in the back."

There was something so sneaky and cringing in its manner that I began to feel less afraid of it. "It's been punished enough already," I said shortly. "It's probably dead by this time."

"Oh, surely not!" it said, squirming. "It has merely fainted. Though I can't think why."

"You don't seem to be aware," I replied, without disguising the disgust I felt, "that your appearance is enough to upset anyone."

"I'm afraid," it admitted, as it began to brush the mould from its frightful little twiggy legs, "my person has indeed been a little neglected. But I shall be presentable enough, after I have been a few days under your kindly care."

I let it know pretty plainly that if it imagined I was going to take it in, it was considerably mistaken—which seemed to disappoint it.

"But why not?" it said, and blinked at me again. "*Why* can't you take me in?"

"Because," I said bluntly, "a house like this is not the place for creatures of your sort."

"Oh," it replied, "but I am accustomed to roughing it, and I would put up with any drawbacks for the pleasure of your society!"

The calm cheek of this was almost too much for me. "I dare say you would," I said, "but you're not going to get the chance. What I meant was, as a Mandrake—which you can't deny you are—you are not a fit person to be admitted into any respectable household."

It protested volubly that it couldn't answer for other Mandrakes, it could only assure me that its own character was beyond reproach. It added that it had felt strongly attracted to me from the moment it saw my face, and its instinct told it that I should reciprocate the feeling in time.

I made the obvious retort that if its instinct told it that, it lied; I said I had no wish to argue with it, but it had better understand that it must leave the house at once.

"Don't repulse me!" it whined "I want you to treat me as a friend. Call me 'Ferdie.' Do call me 'Ferdie'!"

All I said to that was that, if it didn't clear out of its own accord, I should be obliged to take it by the scruff of its neck and chuck it out of the window, which, as I pointed out, was conveniently open. Though, to tell you the truth, this was only bluff, for I wouldn't have touched the thing for any money.

Then the plausible little beast tried to work on my pity; there had been no rain for days, it said, and it was feeling so parched and dry, and generally exhausted. "Well," I said, relenting a little, "I'll give you just one whisky and soda, and after that you must go." But it refused anything but plain soda, with which I filled a tumbler to the brim, and the Mandrake stooped down and drained it greedily with great gulps.

The soda-water seemed to buck it up in a most extraordinary way. Its shrivelled little form began to fill out, and its extremities to look more like hands and feet, while its height actually increased by several inches. But in other respects I could see no improvement.

"I feel a different being," it informed me complacently. "It's just occurred to me," it went on, "that the prejudice which I can't help seeing you have against me may be due to my want of clothing. Underground that did not signify, but, in the world above, I quite recognise that the proprieties should be observed. Only I don't see—ah, the very things. . . . *Will* you excuse me?"

It had suddenly caught sight of a large Golliwogg, which I had bought for Peggy, and which was lying on the table. Before I could interfere the Mandrake had deftly stripped the doll of its blue coat, white shirt, and red trousers, and arrayed itself in them. "Now," it remarked proudly, "you will have no need to blush for me!"

I think I never saw anything more outrageously grotesque than the spectacle that Mandrake presented in the Golliwogg's

garments, which hung about its meagre body in loose folds. But it strutted about with immense satisfaction. "Quite a fair fit," it said, trying to twist its ugly head round and see its back. "Though I'm not sure there isn't a wrinkle between the shoulders. Do *you* notice it?"

I said I thought it need not distress itself about that, and again ordered it to get out.

"But where am I to *get* to?" it said; "I can't go back to the garden *now*. And it's *your* garden, which surely gives me some claim on your hospitality!"

I said it had no claims on me whatever; if anyone was responsible for it, Messrs. Protheroe and Morris were the proper parties to apply to, and I gave it their address in Cheapside. Perhaps this was hardly fair on the firm, who, of course, would not have sold such a thing, knowingly, as an anemone root—but I had to get out of it somehow.

I did not pitch it out of window; I showed it to the front door, like an ordinary caller. "Then you cast me from you," it sighed in the passage, as I undid the chain. "Are we to meet as strangers henceforth?"

"If we ever meet at all," I said, "which I see no necessity for. Good night." But it still lingered on the door-mat.

"Ah, well," it said, "it cannot be that I shall find all hearts as hard as yours. Did you say Cheapside?"

I said if it had any difficulty in finding the way it had better ask a constable. It thanked me profusely, begged me not to trouble to come to the gate with it, and left.

With all my instinctive repugnance, I could not help feeling slightly ashamed of myself; it did look such a forlorn and pitiable little wretch as it shambled down the path and slipped through the bars of the gate!

But what could I do? To keep it was out of the question; Louisa would never stand it—the thing would get on her nerves. And then there were the Dudlows. What would Violet, what would her father and mother, think of me if they discovered that I was harbouring such a beastly thing as a Mandrake?

I chained and barred the door, congratulating myself that, so far as I was concerned, the affair was done with. And then I went to bed, deciding that it would be better not to mention the matter to Louisa.

The next day of course was Christmas. I was sitting by the fire in the dining-room, which faces the road. Louisa was at church, and I ought to have been there, too. I didn't quite know why I hadn't gone, as I should certainly have met Violet there, and perhaps walked home with her afterwards—but I supposed I hadn't felt up to it.

Anyhow there I was, in an arm-chair with a pipe and a newspaper, when all at once I became aware of a low tapping at the bow-window behind my back. I didn't look round, for I had a sort of presentiment of what it was. And then, in the bevelled plate-glass mirror of the sideboard opposite, I saw reflected a flash of scarlet and blue among the variegated laurels in one of the window-boxes, and I knew for certain that that

"IT STILL LINGERED ON THE DOOR-MAT."

infernal little Mandrake had turned up again. The tapping grew louder, but I took no notice, hoping that it would soon get tired of it and go away.

However, it persevered until I began to feel alarmed lest it should attract the attention of the people opposite, who are rather given to gossiping. So I got up and let the thing in, and asked it what the deuce it wanted now —for I was extremely annoyed. Without waiting for an invitation it took the arm-chair opposite mine, with a cough which was either deferential or due to the tobacco-smoke. Then it explained that its intrusion, which it hoped I would overlook, had been prompted by an irresistible impulse to wish me the Compliments of the Season.

Of course I knew it had some deeper motive than that, and I made no answer, beyond grunting. It appeared that it had gone to Cheapside, but had found neither Mr. Protheroe nor Mr. Morris at home—which did not surprise me. It had been wandering about all night, though it had contrived—it did not mention how, and I asked no questions—to refresh itself with some cocoa and a slice of cake at a coffee-stall. And, its appetite having once been aroused, it had begun, it said, to feel hungry again. Might it trespass on me for a meal? It would be deeply grateful, even if I could do no more for it than a mince-pie.

I declined. Not from stinginess, but a conviction that it would be the thin end of the wedge. I might have it staying on to lunch—and there were Louisa's feelings to be considered. It took the refusal meekly enough, and said it had another favour to ask of me. Perhaps I had not observed that it had been putting on flesh with a rapidity which it could only attribute to the currant cake?

I had already noticed a change. It was now at least two feet high; its blue jacket was reduced to a bolero, while its red breeches were hardly bigger than bathing-drawers. I forget if it still retained its shirt or not. The Mandrake represented that if this shrinkage were to continue, it would soon be ashamed to present itself in public, and asked if I could recommend it to a really good tailor—"not the one who made those things you have on," it explained. "I prefer a quieter style myself."

I knew there was no fault to be found with the clothes I was wearing, a neat suit in quite the right shade of green, and I might have shut the little beggar up pretty sharply if I had chosen. But after all, what *did* it matter what a Mandrake thought of my things?

"I feel sure I should be a success in society," it went on, wriggling with suppressed eagerness as it spoke, "if I were only decently dressed. I have many gifts, and even accomplishments. All my tastes are innocent and refined. You would find we had much in common, if you would only try to regard me as a friend. If," it entreated, with a smile which it evidently intended to be winning, but which came out on its gnarled wooden countenance as a revoltingly offensive leer, "If I could once hear you call me 'Ferdie'!"

It heard me call it several names—but "Ferdie" was not one of them. "Then do I gather," it said, "that, in your judgment, the mere fact of my extraction, if known, would be sufficient to exclude me from any social circle?"

I replied that that was distinctly my impression. "Then," it stipulated, "if I leave you now, will you give me your word of honour as a young English gentleman never to reveal to any living soul what I really am?"

What it really was must be so obvious to the most careless observer that I felt I could safely promise, and besides, I was in such a hurry to get it out of the way before Louisa returned from church. Then it asked if there were not charitable persons called "clergy" who were in the habit of relieving deserving cases, and, with a sudden inspiration, I gave it Casbird's name and address, on condition that it did not mention who had sent it to him.

And at last, after having the unblushing impudence to inquire affectionately after Togo, it started. As I watched it slink across the road and round the corner in the direction of the curate's lodgings, I could not resist a grim chuckle. For I knew Tony Casbird not only as a fellow of strong common sense, but as a fair all-round cricketer and a first-rate half-back, and if this little beast was getting uppish, he could be safely trusted to put it in its proper place.

And anyhow, the job was more in his line than mine.

It must have been the same evening that Casbird came in. In fact I know it was, because he said he couldn't stay long, as he was going on to "Ingleholme" to tell Miss Dudlow how pleased his vicar had been with the charming effect of the Christmas decorations, which she had taken a prominent part in arranging.

Casbird was a devoted admirer of Violet's —but I was not afraid of *him*, for I didn't think he stood a sporting chance. Just as he

rose to go, he mentioned that on returning from service that morning he had found a most interesting visitor waiting to see him. I thought I could guess who it was, but I wasn't going to give myself away, so I merely said, "Oh, really?" or something of that sort.

"Yes," said Casbird, "I have seldom known a sadder, stranger case. He has come through so much, and with such splendid pluck and endurance."

Naturally Louisa wanted to know more about him. What was he like? Casbird said really he scarcely knew how to describe him. Handsome? Well, no, he should hardly call him *that*—in fact, at first sight, his appearance was somewhat against him. But such a bright, cheery little chap! So simple and fresh. "I assure you," the curate concluded, "that somehow he makes me feel quite worldly by comparison!"

"THE PERFORMER WAS HOLDING HIS AUDIENCE ENTRANCED WITH DELIGHT AND AMAZEMENT."

I thought I *must* have been wrong—he couldn't possibly be referring to the Mandrake! "What do you call it—I mean *him?*" I asked.

"Well," said the curate, "I call him 'Ferdie' at present. It was his own wish, and he hasn't told me his other name yet. I am putting him up until I can find a suitable opening for him. He's a delightful companion, so touchingly grateful for the least kindness, so full of little delicate attentions! Why, when I came in to tea this afternoon, I found the little fellow had actually put my slippers inside the fender to warm, and was toasting a crumpet for me by the fire!"

I listened aghast. I knew Casbird rather went in for being broad-minded and tolerant and that—but I'd really no idea he would carry it so far as to chum up with a Mandrake! Well, it was his own affair. The thing was evidently an accomplished liar, and it would not surprise me in the least if when he got back he found that it had gone off with his spoons.

After Casbird had left, Louisa expressed a great curiosity to meet this new *protégé* of his, and was slightly annoyed with me for showing so little interest in the subject. I began to regret that promise of mine.

The Dudlows were having a children's party on the evening of Boxing Day, and I

had been looking forward to it eagerly. For one thing, because I always do enjoy children's parties, and in Cricklebury Park there are some particularly nice kiddies. For another, because I had made up my mind that, if I had an opportunity, I would speak out to Violet before the evening was over. I wouldn't let myself feel too sure beforehand, because that is unlucky—but all the same, I had a kind of feeling that it would be all right.

And Dudlow was not likely to refuse his consent to an engagement, for I knew his wife would put in a word for me. Mrs. Dudlow had approved of me from the first, when she saw what friends I had made with the younger children, Peggy and little Joan. Children, she always maintained, were "such infallible judges of character."

They had made me promise to come early, because, as Mrs. Dudlow was kind enough to say, they depended on me to "set the ball rolling."

I got to "Ingleholme" as early as I could, but the moment Louisa and I had passed the "cathedral glass" portico, I was aware from the shouts of children's laughter that came from the drawing-room that the ball had begun to roll already without my assistance. And I must confess that it was rather a blow, on entering, to find that, instead of the welcome I had expected, my appearance passed almost unnoticed. But they were all much too absorbed in something that was going on in the inner room—even Violet's greeting was a little casual. "Such a wonderful conjurer," she whispered; "if you go nearer the arch, you will see him much better."

When I did, I must leave you to imagine my feelings on discovering that the performer who was holding his audience entranced with delight and amazement was nothing else than that miserable little beast of a Mandrake!

It had gone on growing, and was now the height of a middle-sized pygmy—but it was just as hideous as ever, and in spite of its being in correct evening clothes, I knew it at once. And what is more, I could see it knew *me*, and was trying to catch my eye and claim my admiration.

It was conjuring—or I should rather say, pretending to conjure—for while it kept on jabbering away with the utmost assurance, it never succeeded in bringing off a single trick. Now, I don't call myself a conjurer (though I can do a few simple things with eggs and half-crowns and so forth)—but I should have been sorry to make such an exhibition of myself as that incompetent little rotter was doing.

The odd thing was that nobody but myself seemed in the least to realize how poor the performance was; the Mandrake had got round them all, grown-ups and children alike, and deluded them into accepting its bungling efforts as a quite marvellous display of dexterity. Why, even when, after borrowing Dudlow's gold watch, it coolly handed it back smashed to fragments, he merely swept all the loose wheels and springs into his waistcoat pocket, and said that it was "Capital—uncommonly clever." And not out of politeness, mind you; I could see he really thought so!

After the conjuring there were games, which were entirely organized by the Mandrake. Nobody consulted *me;* if I hadn't joined in by way of asserting myself, I should have been completely out of it. I tried to behave as if I didn't know the Mandrake was in the room; but this was not easy, as the little brute made a point of barging into me and rumpling my hair and pommelling me all over, as if to induce me to take some notice of it.

People only remarked on its high spirits, but I couldn't help saying that there was a considerable difference between high spirits and downright horseplay; and really, to hear little Joy Hammond (a special pal of mine) coming up with flushed face and sparkling eyes when I was gasping on the carpet, trying to recover my wind and one or two of my enamel and mother-of-pearl waistcoat buttons, and asking me, "*Isn't* Ferdie a lovely toy-fellow?" was enough to put anyone a little out of temper!

The children all called it "Ferdie." Bobbie Clint, another intimate friend of mine, informed me proudly that it had "particularly asked them to." It was simply maddening to see them all hanging about it, and making such a ridiculous fuss over that little horror, while Casbird looked on smiling, with all the airs of a public benefactor!

I felt it was almost too hard to bear when my beloved Violet reproved me privately for my stiffness, and added that, if there *was* one quality more than another she detested in a man, it was a sulky disposition!

I did not defend myself—my pride kept me silent; if she chose to misunderstand me, she must. But I was determined to have it out with the Mandrake privately at the very first opportunity—and I contrived to inveigle it out of the room on some pretext—"Dumb Crambo," I think it was.

It skipped into the hall with me readily enough; I fancy it flattered itself that I was coming round at last. But I very soon un-

deceived it: I told it that it knew as well as I did it had no business there, and I insisted on its leaving the house instantly, offering, if it did so, to save its face by explaining that it had been suddenly called away.

I can see it now as it sat perched on an oak chest, looking up at me with an assumption of injured innocence. It protested that it didn't want to go yet—why *should* it, when it was having the time of its life, and everybody, except me, was being so kind to it? It had the impertinence to add that it was sorry to see a character so fine in many respects as mine disfigured by so mean a passion as jealousy—which made me furious.

I replied that I was hardly likely to be jealous under the circumstances, and it could leave my character alone. All I had to say was that, if the Mandrake remained, I should be compelled to speak out.

"Oh no!" it said, "you will not do that, because, if you remember, you gave me your word of honour that you would never betray the secret of my birth!"

"When I gave that," I retorted, "I never imagined you would have the audacity to push yourself in here—and at a children's party too!"

It said it had always been its dream to be invited to a real children's party, and now it had come true and I must have seen how popular it was making itself. It was sure I would not be so cruel as to expose it—I was too honourable a gentleman to break my word.

It had found my weak point there and knew it—but I stood firm. "I don't consider myself bound by that any longer," I said. "It's my duty to say what I know—and, if you leave me no other alternative, I mean to do it."

"Listen to me," it said, with a soft but deadly earnestness, and I thought I could read in its little eyes, as they glittered in the rays of the hall lantern, a certain veiled and sinister menace. "I warn you, for your own sake, because I should like to spare you if possible. If you insist on denouncing me, you little know the consequences you will bring upon yourself! *You* will be the chief sufferer from your rashness."

I can't deny that this warning had some effect on me; so much so, in fact, that I am afraid I climbed down to some extent. I said that I was as anxious as itself to avoid a scandal, and that I should take no steps so long as it behaved itself. And then we went in and played "Dumb Crambo," or whatever it was, and I got mauled about by the Mandrake more severely than ever!

But I was beginning to have enough of it, and I took the curate aside and hinted that his friend struck me as a bit of a bounder, and that as he was already getting above himself, it would be as well to get him away before supper. Casbird was indignant; he said that "Ferdie" was the life and soul of the party, and he couldn't understand my attitude, especially when the dear little fellow had taken such a decided fancy to me! He had always thought, he said, that I was above these petty prejudices. So I didn't press it, and soon afterwards we went in to supper.

It made me feel positively ill to see all those nice kiddies almost fighting

"IF YOU INSIST ON DENOUNCING ME, YOU LITTLE KNOW THE CONSEQUENCES YOU WILL BRING UPON YOURSELF!"

for the privilege of sitting next that little fraud, and then to watch it making an absolute hog of itself with sausage-rolls and lemon sponge! And the way they pulled crackers with it, too, and pressed the rings out of them on it as keepsakes, till its little claws were loaded with cheap jewellery. I sat between Violet and Peggy—but neither of them offered to pull a cracker with *me!*

Still, I bore it all without murmuring until towards the end, when Dudlow suddenly got up and asked us to charge our glasses and drink to the health of the new friend who had contributed so enormously to the general enjoyment that evening.

I knew what was coming, and so did the Mandrake, though it cast down its eyes with a self-conscious smirk, as if it could not think to whom its host was referring!

And then, all at once, I felt I could not stand any more. It was my duty to speak. Whatever it might cost me, I *must* prevent poor Dudlow—whom I liked and respected for his own sake as well as because he was Violet's father—from making such an irreparable mistake as proposing the health of a Mandrake at his own table!

So I rose, and implored him to sit down and leave the rest of his speech unspoken; I said I had reasons which I would explain privately later on.

He replied rather heatedly that he would have no hole-and-corner business under *his* roof; if I had anything to say, I had better say it then and there, or sit down and hold my tongue.

The Mandrake sat perfectly calm, with its beady eyes fixed warningly on me, but I saw its complexion slowly change from coal-black to an awful grey-green shade that made the blue and pink fool's cap it was wearing seem even more hideously incongruous.

But I had gone too far to stop now; I was no longer afraid of its vengeance. It might blast me to death where I stood—I didn't care. It would only reveal its true character—and then, perhaps, Violet would be sorry for having misjudged me so!

"If that—that *thing* over there," I said, pointing to it, "had not cast some cursed spell over you all, so far from drinking its unwholesome health, you would shrink from it in horror!"

There was a general outcry, amidst which Casbird sprang to his feet. "Let us have no more of these dastardly insinuations!" he shouted. "Tell us, if you can, what you accuse our Ferdie of having done!"

"It's not what it's *done*," I said, "it's what it *is!* Are you blind, that you cannot see that it's nothing more or less than a Mandrake?" I was going on to explain how I had bought it by mistake in a bag of mixed anemone roots, when Dudlow brought me up with a round turn that almost took my breath away.

"And if he *is* a Mandrake, sir," he said, "what *of* it?"

"What *of* it?" I could only gasp feebly. "I should have thought myself that that was quite enough to make him impossible—at a party like this!"

"And who are *you*," thundered the curate, "that you presume to sit in judgment on a fellow-creature? Let me tell you that you might have some reason for this superciliousness if you were half as good a man as poor dear little Ferdie here is a Mandrake!" He patted it affectionately on the shoulder as he spoke, and I saw Violet's lovely eyes first shine on him in admiration of his chivalry, and then blaze on me with scorn and contempt.

Indeed, they all seemed to consider my conduct snobbish in the extreme, and the Mandrake was the object of universal sympathy as it endeavoured to squeeze out a crocodile tear or two.

"All *right!*" I said. "Pitch into me if you like! But you will see presently. It threatened me only half an hour ago with the most awful consequences if I dared to expose it. Now let it do its worst!"

But little did I foresee the fiendish revenge it was preparing. It got up on its chair and began to make a speech. *Such* a speech—every sentence of it reeking with the cheapest sentiment, the most maudlin claptrap! But clever—diabolically clever, even I could not help acknowledging *that.*

It began by saying how hurt it felt that I could imagine it would ever harm a hair of my head. Never, no, not even when I had driven it from my door last Christmas Eve, out into the bitter night and the falling snow (which was sheer melodrama, for Christmas Eve had been rather warmer and muggier than usual!), not even then had it had any sentiments towards me but the humblest devotion and affection! It did not blame me for resenting its intrusion among them that evening. Perhaps I could not be expected to understand what a temptation it had been to a lonely wanderer like itself to forget the inferiority of its position, and share for a few too fleeting hours in the innocent revelry of happy children, at a season, too, when it had fondly hoped that charity and

goodwill might be shown to all alike. But I had made it realize its mistake—and now it could only implore our pardon and assure us that it would trouble us but a very little while longer.

At this its voice quavered, and it broke down, most artistically. There was not a dry eye — except mine — round the supper-table. As for Dudlow, he was blubbering quite openly, while Peggy, Joan, Joy Hammond, and all the other children entreated "darling Ferdie" not to leave them, and I heard myself described by Bobbie Clint as a "beastly beast," and Tommy Dickson passionately declared that I was a sneak!

"IT COLLAPSED IN A HEAP ON ITS CHAIR."

All this was unpleasant enough—but nothing to what followed. That devilish little imp was keeping an even higher card up its sleeve for the climax. After mastering its emotion, it thanked all its dear young playmates for still desiring to keep it with them, but said that, alas, it was not to be! The sudden shock of learning that I, whose affection it had striven so hard to win, regarded it with such bitter antipathy had been too much for its high-strung, sensitive nature—it felt that its end was very near. One last request it had to make of me, and that was that I would accept the beautiful emerald ring it had on (off a cracker, if you please!), and wear it always as a remembrance, and in token that it forgave me, fully and freely!

And then, to my unspeakable horror, it collapsed in a heap on its chair, and shrivelled slowly away inside its dress-clothes until it was once more the wizened object it had been when I first saw it!

You may have seen those "dying roosters" they sell in the streets — well, it went down exactly like one of those. And up to the time its head fell over in a final droop, its evil little eyes were fixed on me with vindictive triumph.

It had scored off me thoroughly, and was jolly well aware of it.

I knew perfectly well that the little wretch wasn't really dead — but though I assured them all it was merely shamming, they only turned away in horror at what they called my "cold-blooded brutality."

It was like some horrible nightmare. I was in the right and they were all wrong—but I couldn't get anybody to see it. I would rather not dwell on the scene that followed: the wailing of those poor deluded little kiddies, Louisa's hysterical refusal to consider me any longer a brother of hers, Casbird's manly sorrow over the departed Ferdie, and Violet's gentle, loving efforts to console him. I had no time to observe more, for just then Dudlow ordered me out of the house and forbade me ever again to cross his threshold. . . .

I must have got back to "Ullswater" somehow, but I have no recollection of doing so. Everything was a blank until I found myself in our drawing-room, lying groaning in an arm-chair, with my head pressed against its side.

And then, as the incidents of that disastrous party came back to me, one by one, I shivered in an agony of shame. I really do not think I have ever felt so utterly miserable in all my life!

I had done for myself, hopelessly, irretrievably. I had lost Violet for ever. Louisa would tell me, the moment she came home, that we must arrange to live apart. Casbird would cut me dead in future. Even the little kiddies would refuse to be friends with me any longer! . . . And why had all this happened? Because I had not had the sense to hold my tongue! What earthly business was it of mine if the Dudlows chose to invite a Mandrake to "Ingleholme"? Why need I have been so down on the poor little brute? At Christmas-time, too, when any ordinarily decent fellow would have taken a more Dickensy view of things! I couldn't understand my having behaved so outrageously—it did not seem like *me*. . . .

And yet, hang it all! I had only done the right thing. True, I might have been more tactful over it. I could see now, when it was too late, that to go and make a scene at supper like that was scarcely good form. I might have thought more of the children's feelings.

Here a dreadful doubt took hold of me. Suppose I had been mistaken all along in the Mandrake's character? I knew very little about the creatures after all—only what I had read in Sir Thomas Browne, and even *he* seemed to hold that the stories to their discredit were either exaggerations or vulgar or common errors.

And, repulsive as I had found "Ferdie," I could not remember anything in his conduct that would seem very reprehensible, even in a choir-boy. And all his sentiments had been exemplary. Had *I* been guilty of a "vulgar error"? Had I really, as Casbird put it, "broken a loving little heart by my stupid cruelty"? Was I, as he had called me, a "moral murderer"? They might hold an inquest on the thing. I should be called on to give my evidence—the jury would add a rider to their verdict censuring me for my conduct, and the coroner would endorse their opinion with some severe remarks! It would get into all the papers; the fellows at the bank would send me to Coventry; I should be lucky if I did not get the sack! . . .

But stop—would they really make such a fuss as all that about a mere Mandrake? If they only made a few inquiries, when they calmed down, surely they would find out *something* shady about it. How did it get hold of those evening clothes, for instance, when all the shops were shut? It must have made a burglarious entry somewhere—I remembered how coolly it had appropriated the Golliwogg's . . . and at this point I shuddered and started, as, once again, that long shrill scream rang out into the night! Great heavens! Had Togo pulled up *another* of them? I felt I could *not* go through it all a second time. But this time the sound really was much more like a railway engine. What if, after all—I could settle it in a moment; I had only to turn my head—and, if I saw the Golliwogg lying there on the table with nothing on, I should *know!*

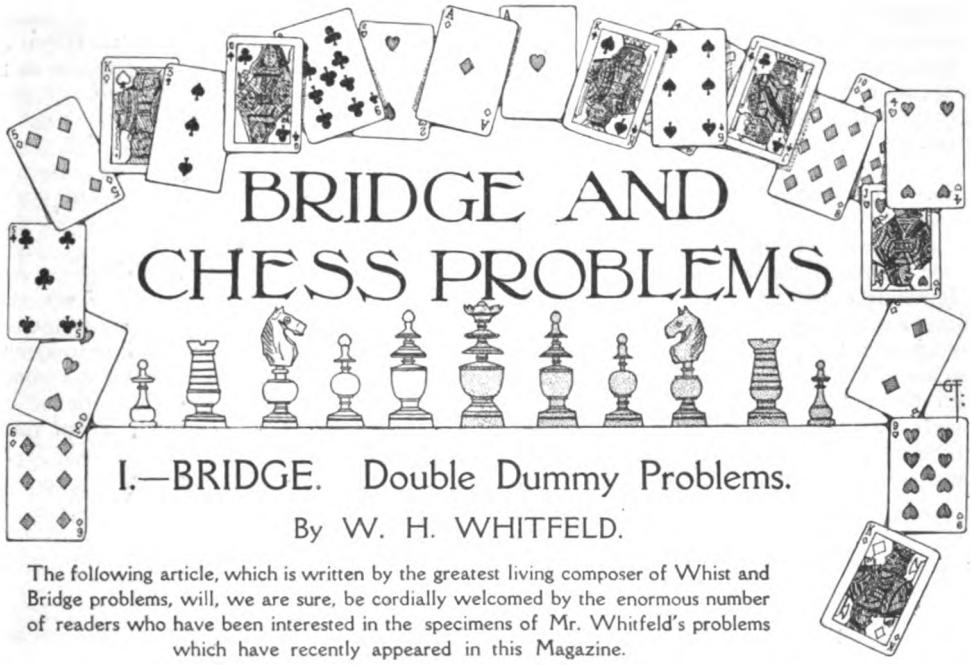
For some seconds I could not summon up courage enough to look.

And then, slowly, in deadly terror of finding my worst fears confirmed, I turned round. . . . .

What my feelings were on discovering that the Golliwogg was fully clothed I can't express—I could have sobbed with relief and joy on its blue shoulder.

I glanced at the old brown book which lay face downwards on the floor. It was still open at Chapter VI., "Of sundry tenents concerning vegetables or plants, which examined, prove either false or dubious." And then it occurred to me that, if I *must* dream any more about Mandrakes, it would on the whole be more comfortable to do so in bed.

The Dudlows' children's party was a very cheery affair, although there was no Mandrake to keep things going. And I *did* get an opportunity of speaking to Violet, and it *was* all right. At least, it will be, as soon as I get my next rise.



I.—BRIDGE. Double Dummy Problems.

By W. H. WHITFELD.

The following article, which is written by the greatest living composer of Whist and Bridge problems, will, we are sure, be cordially welcomed by the enormous number of readers who have been interested in the specimens of Mr. Whitfeld's problems which have recently appeared in this Magazine.

THE oldest problem in cards is that known as the *Vienna coup*, which for many years stood quite by itself and may be said to have been regarded as a classic. It is not so well known now; in fact, a weekly newspaper recently published it under the impression that it was quite a new problem. As it may be new to many readers, it is here given:—

Hearts—Ace, king, queen, knave, 4.
Clubs—9, 8, 7.
Diamonds—10, 9.
Spades—Knave, 7, 6.

Hearts—10, 9, 6, 5, 3.
Clubs—Knave, 5, 2.
Diamonds—Knave, 8, 3.
Spades—King, 8.

B
Y Z
A

Hearts—8, 2.
Clubs—10, 6, 3.
Diamonds—King, 4.
Spades—10, 9, 5, 4, 3, 2.

Hearts—7.
Clubs—Ace, king, queen, 4.
Diamonds—Ace, queen, 7, 6, 5, 2.
Spades—Ace, queen.

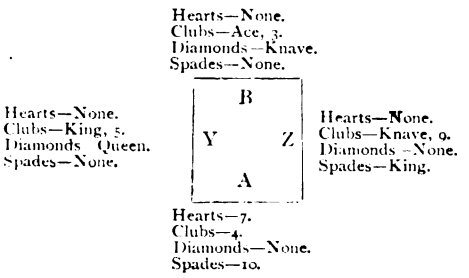
Clubs are trumps. A to lead. A B to win all the thirteen tricks against the best defence.

Many players are now so familiar with discard problems that to them the solution presents no great difficulty. A leads three rounds of trumps, and then the thirteenth trump, which puts Y into difficulties as to the card to discard. The suit that Y unguards is then led, and he is again forced to discard, and thus A B make two tricks besides those which are obvious to the inexperienced. The only other important point is that in one variation A must be careful to lead out the ace of spades before parting with the lead.

The story told is that the cards were actually dealt, and that A immediately announced that he could win all the tricks. Since a similar story has been told in connection with one of my problems, there is strong reason for regarding it as mythical. A player, who could solve the *Vienna coup* at once, must have understood forcing discards, and would have been capable of composing the problem. It is more probable that he should make up the position than that the cards should be actually dealt. Nothing is now known definitely about its origin. As its name implies, Vienna was probably its birthplace, about fifty years ago, perhaps. It is now nearly forty since, as a small boy, I was shown the problem. Curiously enough, it was communicated from Australia. I believed that I solved it; but I am doubtful now whether I appreciated all the points of play. It is certain that I never forgot the problem, and I have to thank it for directing my attention to double dummy problems, and at a later period firing me with the ambition to make a problem of equal merit. For a long time I failed. My best attempts were more or less reproductions of the *Vienna coup*, and did not excite the admiration which I expected.

It is not hard to find the weak point in the *Vienna coup* regarded as a work of art. It lies in the extreme weakness of Z's hand. The only card worth mentioning is the king of diamonds, singly guarded, with the ace and queen over it. In the language of the card-room, the hand might as well be under the table. The problem, though it is called a double dummy one, would be equally difficult at a game—misery bridge, for instance—where the fourth packet dealt is laid aside.

It was in attempting to remedy this defect of the *Vienna coup*, and in making the fourth hand join in the play, that I met my first real success. There are various ways in which both the adversaries can be forced to unguard a suit. The simplest form of the simplest problem is in the following position :—

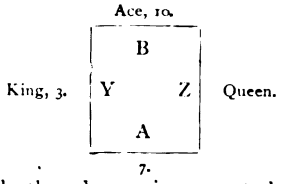


Hearts are trumps. A has the lead. A B have to win the three tricks.

The solution is : A leads the last trump, Y, having to keep his diamond, is forced to throw a club. B, playing after him, then throws his diamond. Z must then either play a spade, letting A's ten of spades win, or play a club, letting B's three of clubs take the last trick.

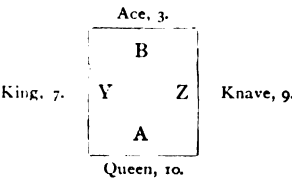
I forget how it was that this position occurred to me. I believe that it was, to some extent, suggested by actual play. I thought that it was a new discovery. Looking over the *Westminster Papers*, I have recently found that I was anticipated by several years. This idea, elaborated, has formed the theme of a number of problems, both by myself and other composers. I may add that in ordinary bridge I have seen many opportunities of playing the *coup*, and quite recently, looking on at a hand, I saw an easy chance missed ; however, the adversaries kindly gave the trick back.

One difficulty in making up problems of this kind is that, in most positions that can be devised, it is as easy, or easier, for the adversaries to keep their suits as it is for the side that is forcing discards. In order to put the adversaries into difficulties, it is necessary, except in the case already mentioned, to have one suit from which neither of them can discard without loss. Such a position as the following, for instance :—



Here both adversaries must keep their cards in the suit. With this arrangement of the cards in one suit, it is possible to arrange the other suits so that a trick can be won by forcing discards from both adversaries.

Another position of which I am rather fond is :—

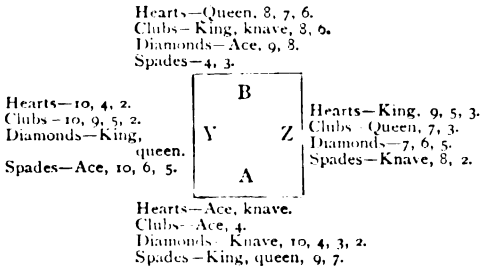


Neither adversary can discard from the suit under pain of losing a trick.

Although I have spoken only of discard problems, I must guard against the impression that all double dummy problems are discard problems. Only about a half of the best problems are connected with forcing discards, and even in many of these the discard is of secondary importance to other points of play. The *coups* are too many and various for any classification to be made. A large number, however, involve throwing a high card for the purpose of placing the lead in a certain hand.

The *Westminster Papers* in its eleven years of existence had a fair share of space devoted to whist. Each month there was a double dummy problem. F. H. Lewis was nearly always the composer. He had a great reputation as a double dummy player, and undoubtedly possessed great analytical power. Scattered through the problems there are ideas which might be elaborated into fine problems. At that time Lewis may almost be said to have held a monopoly of double dummy problems. Fortunately for later composers, he did not make the most of his opportunities. There is reason to suppose that the number of independent *coups* that can be devised out of the fifty-two cards is limited, and if Lewis had fully utilized the materials already at his command there would have been little left for others to invent. It may be that, having

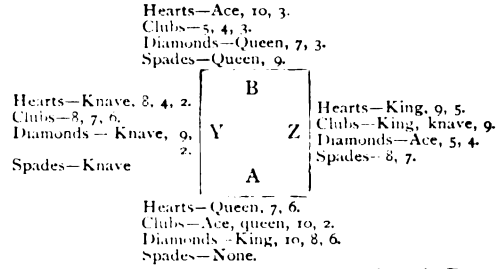
a fresh problem to make each month, he did not concentrate his powers upon single problems, but endeavoured to keep some ideas for future use. Whatever the reason, he has left behind no masterpiece. The greater number of his problems seem to have been suggested by actual play, slight alterations having been made from the hands as dealt, and might be more fitly described as difficult and complicated hands rather than as problems. Truth to tell, there is evidence of insufficient care in examining them before publication; they are faulty more often than not, either the author's solution being wrong or there being another solution. There are, however, a few that are very ingeniously constructed. One of the best of them is given below. By some players it has been pronounced the most difficult problem extant :—



Hearts are trumps. A to lead. A B to make three by cards.

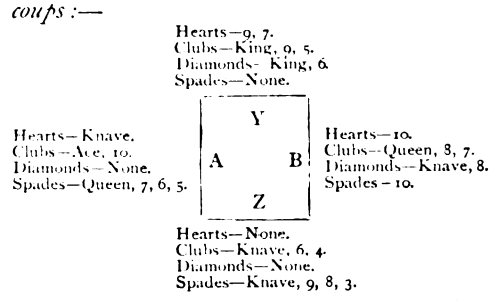
The solution depends on the necessity of trumping spades once before trumps are cleared, taking due care not to leave both the best spade and a card of re-entry in Y's hand. A has rather greater strength in spades than is necessary; owing to this there are, in some lines of defence, alternative methods of attack, provided always that A begins with a high spade.

After the *Westminster Papers*, which ceased in 1879, there was a gap of several years, in which little was heard of double dummy and its problems. Generally I do not regard it as a blessing to have been born half a century ago. That fact has, however, enabled me to be beforehand with other problem composers, more numerous and talented now than at any previous period. In the days of whist it seemed to me that there was a certain amount of antagonism to double dummy. The vast majority of whist players were not adepts at making tricks with the cards exposed, and rather resented the idea that skill at double dummy was necessary to a whist-player. Bridge and double dummy are more in sympathy. The present competition craze has further increased the popularity of double dummy problems. In "Double Dummy Bridge," written by Mr. Ernest Bergholt, his selection of problems quite rightly contains none except by living authors. I have, by permission, selected examples from this work. This is one of Mr. Bergholt's masterpieces :—



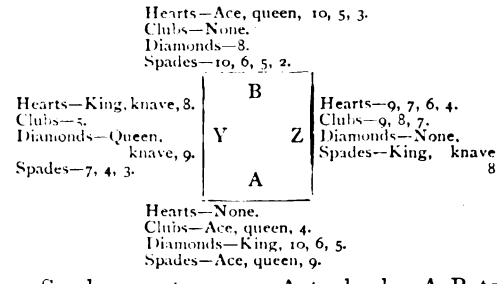
Hearts are trumps. A to lead. A B to win eight out of the eleven tricks.

This is an example of the skill of "Bedouin," who has devised some brilliant *coups* :—



Hearts are trumps. Z to lead. Y Z to win four out of the seven tricks.

America is fitly represented by this pretty little problem by Dr. C. T. Milliken :—



Spades are trumps. A to lead. A B to win nine out of the ten tricks.

I have sometimes been asked how my problems are composed, whether I am indebted to positions that have occurred in actual play. I have not played double dummy to any great extent, and though I have frequently met with pretty *coups* and difficult positions, I have never found a distribution of the cards that could be made into a problem without considerable alteration. False and dual solutions that I have

found in my own and other people's problems have occasionally suggested ideas for fresh problems. The great majority, however, of my problems are entirely manufactured, the last tricks generally being made first and the beginning added by degrees. Sometimes my method has been to think of the apparently worst or most improbable kind of play, and then arrange the cards to make it win a trick. It is a fact that the first good problem of mine was made up in bed, when I was kept awake nearly the whole of the night against my wish through an overstrong cup of coffee. As far as I can remember, I had not the slightest idea of the problem when I went to bed. In the morning it was finished, and it has never been altered since. I was thoughtless and unkind enough to send the problem to "Cavendish" without sending the solution. He took more trouble than I deserved; but the letter which I received in return informed me that there was some mistake in the cards, since four of the best players in London had pronounced the problem incapable of solution. I believe the four players were the best players in the Portland Club, but I have my doubts about them being the best players in London.*

It was that problem that first brought me into notice; an ultimate result was my connexion with the *Field*. With that exception my problems have not assisted me materially. Composing problems is an interesting pastime. If anyone intends to make a living out of double dummy problems, my advice is to try "Limericks."

Problem composers, like other writers, have suffered from piracy. Dr. Pole, generally scrupulous in such matters, put one of my problems into his book without any mention of my name or permission from me. I do not regard it as more than an oversight. With that exception I have no complaint against any book. With regard to newspapers and periodicals, an editor naturally has a great deal of matter sent to him, and, if he is not quite up to the mark, will let in pirated work under the impression that it is original. This is excusable, provided that the editor is ready to make amends when the error is proved. A case was brought to my notice in which the author had great difficulty in getting any sort of acknowledgment from the editor. In America the dishonesty is more flagrant. A man took my eight-card problem, put two rounds of trumps at the beginning, and got it published with his own name as author in a well-known magazine. The addition did not require much skill, but he made two blunders in doing it. Looking at the cards that had been played, one trick must have consisted of three clubs and a trump; as no player was blank in either clubs or trumps, one player must have revoked. Secondly, his alteration introduced another method of solution. After all, it might have been worse if he had put my name to the problem.

A problem-maker is not always a judge of the difficulty of his compositions. I have sometimes been surprised how easily what I thought my hardest nuts have been cracked. Nor is the difficulty of a problem always a criterion of merit. A hand demanding a brilliant *coup* would be difficult to play if it occurred in an actual game. The conditions are different when the same *coup* occurs in a problem. The fact that it is a problem gives the solvers the hint as to what to look for. Often the more brilliant the *coup*, the easier it is to discover.

Of course, I have very frequently had my own problems referred to me by correspondents and friends who have been totally ignorant that I was the composer. Sometimes it has been because the solution has been wanted, sometimes for the purpose of publication. Not long ago a correspondent sent me one of my less-known productions, kindly enclosing the solution in a sealed envelope. He requested that I should not open the envelope until I had failed to do the problem after a thorough trial.

I will conclude by giving a problem of my own that has not before been published:—

Hearts—Knave, 9.
Clubs—Ace, 8, 4, 3.
Diamonds—4, 3.
Spades—King, 10, 9, 6, 4.

Hearts—10, 6, 3. Clubs—5. Diamonds—Ace, knave, 9, 7. Spades—Queen, 8, 7, 5, 2.	Y A B Z	Hearts—5, 4. Clubs—King, queen, knave, 9, 7. Diamonds—Queen, 6, 5. Spades—Ace, knave, 3.

Hearts—Ace, king, queen, 8, 7, 2.
Clubs—10, 6, 2.
Diamonds—King, 10, 8, 2.
Spades—None.

Z declares hearts. A leads the five of clubs. Y Z to win two by cards. The solution will appear in the next number.

* This was the beautiful six-card problem which was published in THE STRAND MAGAZINE for last September. For the benefit of readers who may not have seen it, we will here re-state it. Spades are trumps, and A has to lead and A B to win every trick. The hands are as follows:—
A. Hearts—ace, king, 6; Clubs—10; Diamonds—10, 9.
B. Hearts—knave, 4; Clubs—ace, 3; Spades—7, 6.
Y. Hearts—queen, 9; Clubs—knave, 8; Diamonds—knave, 6.
Z. Hearts—10, 5, 3; Clubs—6; Diamonds—queen, 7.

II.—CHESS PROBLEMS.

WITH SELECTIONS FROM THE BEST PROBLEMS EVER COMPOSED.

By J. H. BLACKBURNE, British Chess Champion.

PROBLEMS have, not inaptly, been termed the "poetry of chess," and, judging from the numerous competitions at home and abroad, both for composers and solvers, it is evident that they have become an important branch of the Royal game.

Without technicalities, a problem may be described as an arrangement of the pieces on the chess-board to express or illustrate some deep and subtle strategy or brilliant idea. There should be but one key or first move to effect the desired mate—against the best defence—in the stipulated number of moves. A certain amount of difficulty is, of course, necessary, but the chief attributes of a good problem are beauty of idea or theme and artistic construction. The position must be one that can be arrived at by a series of legitimate moves, as in ordinary play.

Problems may be divided into various classes, such as the "ordinary or direct-mate," the "self-mate or sui-mate," the "conditional," and "retractor or retractive-mate."

There are among the votaries of the Royal game many who believe that problems contain the very highest form of chess, and look upon them as works of art—as much a creation as a painting, poem, or musical composition.

The mere player who has never experienced the magnetic attraction of problems cannot fully realize the feeling of joy and satisfaction from solving some masterpiece, the work of a famous composer.

There can be no doubt that solving problems, especially from diagrams, is an intellectual amusement, and that the study of problems tends to accuracy of analysis, quickens the perception, and strengthens the chess faculties generally, and may occasionally impart some of those sparkling ideas which are so sadly needed in ordinary play.

Perhaps of all the different nationalities the Bohemian problemists are the most prominent. The British, however, for purity and correctness of construction stand pre-eminent.

The chief pioneers of English problems were the Rev. H. Bolton and W. Bone, who flourished in the 'forties. Their productions were tediously long—ranging from five to a dozen moves, or even more—the construction heavy and ponderous, often overcrowded with useless black pieces. The solutions were generally a series of obvious checks, driving the poor unfortunate Black Monarch from pillar to post, from one side of the board to the other; and then, by some brilliant sacrifice, the final *coup* was administered.

But the real founders of the present style of problems were J. Brown, better known as J. B. (of Bridport), Frank Healey, W. Grimshaw, J. G. Campbell, H. J. C. Andrews, and a few others of equal notoriety.

Conspicuous amongst the new or present-day school of problemists are B. G. Laws (acknowledged to be the greatest authority on all matters appertaining to chess problems), J. W. Abbott, Dr. C. Planck, P. F. Blake, and G. Heathcote, all of whom have distinguished themselves in international competitions.

There is one more who must not be forgotten—that is, the late A. F. Mackenzie, of Jamaica, who died but a few years ago—one of the most prolific of composers, who invariably gained high honours in every competition in which he took part.

Although he became blind some years before he died, his mental faculties remained undimmed, and, in spite of being thus heavily handicapped, his productions lacked nothing of their former force or brilliancy.

America has also produced many composers of note. The names of those best known in this country are W. A. Shinkman, G. E. Carpenter, C. A. Gilbert, and the brothers Bettman, and last, though not least, Sam Loyd, who for striking originality and quaintness of ideas is unequalled. He has also established a world-wide reputation by his many curious mathematical and other puzzles.* His productions are deservedly the most popular with the ordinary solver. And though at times his construction may be a little faulty, and not in strict accordance with the rules recognised in this country, yet they are always charming. There is a delightful piquancy about them which leaves

* As may be seen by reference to the interview on page 771.

a pleasing and lasting impression upon the memory. And what more does the solver want?

The following are samples of the various kinds of chess problems.

The first is by Sam Loyd, of New York. It was first published in this country about fifty years ago, and greatly puzzled the solvers of that day, the idea then being entirely new :—

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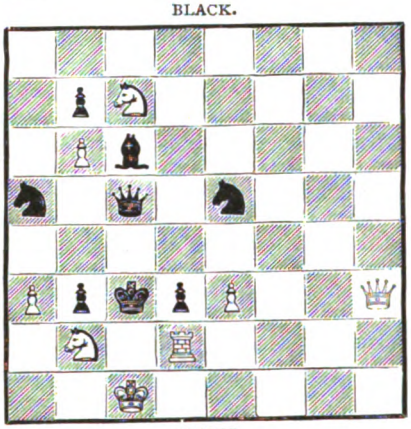

WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

It is what may be termed a pure waiting-move problem—*i.e.*, after White's first move no mate is possible until Black replies. It is solved by Q to B 8th, the most unlikely square on the board. Black is now forced to move, and mate is given accordingly.

The next is of quite a different character, inasmuch as the first move threatens a somewhat commonplace mate. The various defences, however, lead to some elegant mates. It is by J. B. (of Bridport) :—

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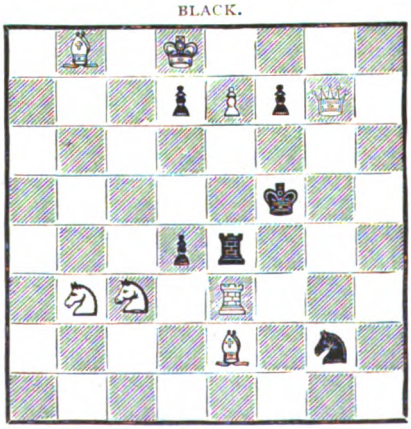

WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

The solution is B to B 4th ; if, in reply, K takes B, then R to B 3rd (mate); if Kt takes B, B to Kt 4th (mate); if R takes B, R to K 4th (mate) ; and if K to K 3rd, then Kt takes P (mate). The other variations are obvious.

When this first appeared, in the 'fifties, it was looked upon as a masterpiece, but it is far from being the ideal of the problemist of to-day. The theme has, however, in combination with other ideas, been utilized in the construction of three-movers.

We now give what is acknowledged to be the finest two-move problem extant. It is by W. A. Shinkman (of America). It is also claimed by G. E. Carpenter, a fellow-countryman of his. Here we have not only a difficult key-move, but also beauty of theme and artistic construction, the three essential qualities necessary to a perfect problem :—

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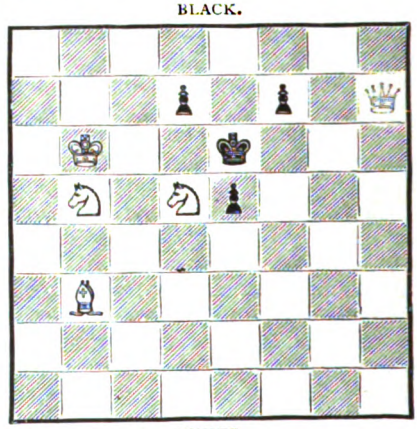

WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

It is solved by B to R 4th, moving the B from a strong position, where it defended a Kt, to, apparently, a useless square. In reply, Black has a choice of five moves. If P to B 4th, that square is blocked, and allows Q to mate on Kt 8th ; if P to B 3rd, another block, then Kt to B 7th (mate); if P to K 5th, Q takes K P (mate) ; if K takes Kt, then B returns to Kt 3rd (mating) ; and if P to Q 3rd, then Kt from Kt 5th to B 7th (mate). And now the object of the first move is revealed—the B commands Q 7th. Truly a marvellous composition.

It may safely be said, without exaggeration, that this idea has been introduced into thousands of problems, in many cases so skilfully disguised as to be almost beyond recognition.

The following is a fine example of the present school of composers; it is not very difficult, but contains some beautiful mates. The author is B. G. Laws :—

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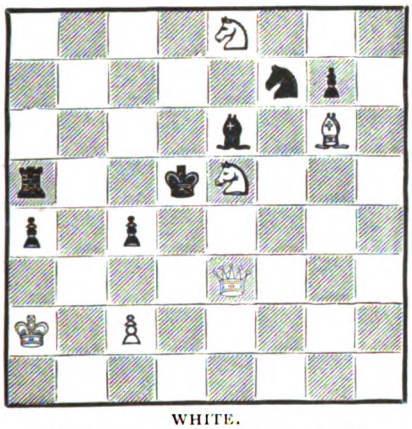

WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

The key-move is B to Q 3rd, threatening B takes P. To prevent this Black must play R to B 4th, Kt takes Kt, Kt to Q 3rd, or P takes B, each move leading to a different mate.

The composer's favourite is the three-mover, because it gives more scope to display his ideas to the best advantage, as will be seen by the following specimens. The first is known as the "Bristol," on account of its gaining first prize in the Bristol competition of 1861. It completely baffled even the expert solvers for some time. The author is Frank Healey :—

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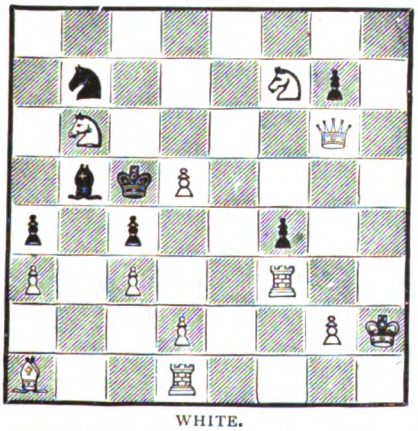

WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

The key is R to R sq, a move which has nothing whatever to do with the mate, except-ing that it makes way for the Q to get to K Kt sq. Placing the R either on the table or in your pocket would solve the problem equally well. The after-play is easy, for Black can only move his B to Q 2nd or K sq; then White plays Q to Kt sq, the Black B goes back to Kt 4th, and mate follows by Q to K Kt sq. This idea may be worked out by a B, Kt, or even a K.

The next one is a model of charming simplicity which has never been surpassed. It is attributed to Alfred de Musset, the French poet :—

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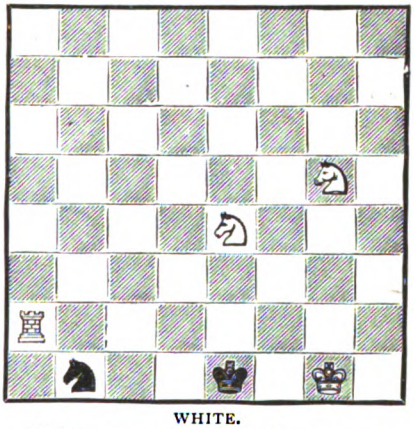

WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

The solution is (1) R to Q 2. Black must take the R with Kt, otherwise he is mated by Kt to B 3rd. Then follows (2) Kt to Q B 3rd, and the mate is given next move.

Now comes one of Sam Loyd's poetical ideas. It has been named "The Love Chase" :—

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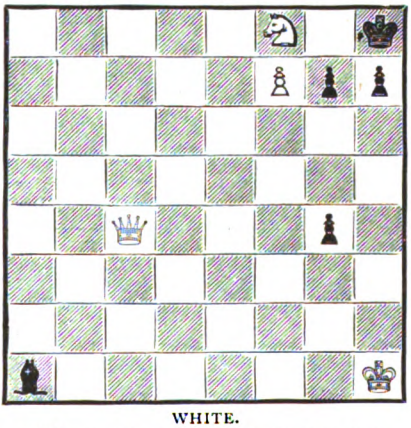

WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

Solution.—(1) Q to K B sq; if P to R 3rd or B to Kt 7th, then (2) Q to Q Kt sq, and on P to Kt 3rd being played, you take the B (mate); if B to B 6th or Q 5th, then (2) Q to Q 3rd and the same mate follows; if B to K 4th or B 3rd, then (2) Q goes to B 5th, and again the same mate. If Black on his first move plays P to Kt 6th, then (2) Kt to Kt 6th (ch), and mates on K R 3rd with Q.

The following is an excellent example of the modern style of composition. It is by A. F. Mackenzie (of Jamaica).

Mr. B. G. Laws says: "This is certainly one of the finest three-movers ever composed. Notice the nicety of the play which allows (2) Q to R 3rd in one variation and (2) B to Kt 4th in another. There are not many pieces, but graceful variety."

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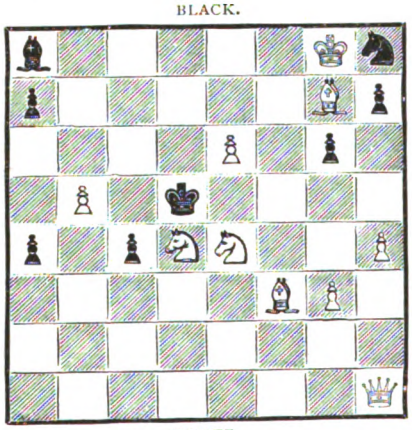

WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

The solution is given in full:—

WHITE.	BLACK.
(1) Kt to K B 5th	(1) P to Kt 4 h
(2) B to Kt 4th, and one of the Kts mates accordingly.	
	If (1) P to R 6th, then
(2) Q to R 3rd and mates with one of the Kts as before.	
	If (1) P takes Kt, then
(2) Q to Q sq (ch), and mates next move on Q 6th.	
	If (1) K takes P, then
(2) Kt to B 5th (ch)	(2) K takes Kt
(3) Q to Q Kt sq (mate)	
	If (1) P to B 6th, then
(2) Q to Q Kt sq, and mates with Q, B, or Kt accordingly.	
	If (1) Kt to B 7th, then
(2) K takes Kt, etc.	And if any other move, (2) Q to R 3rd, and Black cannot escape the mate.

THE SELF OR SUI-MATE.—The annexed is a fine example of this class of mate. It has been pronounced by the experts to be the best ever composed. The author is B. G. Laws:—

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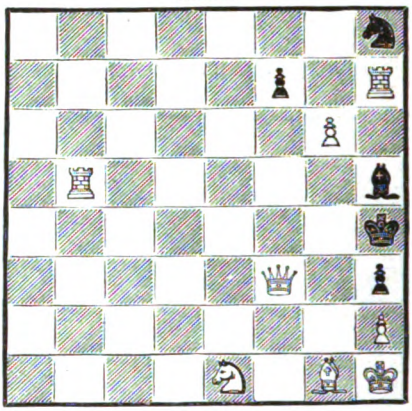

WHITE.

White to play and compel Black to give mate in three moves.

At first sight this seems impossible. The *modus operandi* is as follows:—

WHITE.	BLACK.
(1) Q to R 8th	(1) P takes P
(2) R from R 7th to Q Kt 7th	(2) B to B 6th (ch)
(3) Kt to Kt 2nd (ch)	(3) P or B takes Kt (mate)

If Black on his second move does not check, but plays elsewhere, then White checks with Kt at B 3rd, and B must take mate.

	If (1) Kt takes P, then
(2) Q to R 4th (ch)	(2) Kt to B 5th
(3) Kt to Kt 2nd	(3) P takes Kt (mate)

THE CONDITIONAL MATE.—The example given is from an old Indian problem, slightly modified. The position, though simple, will fully illustrate the idea:—

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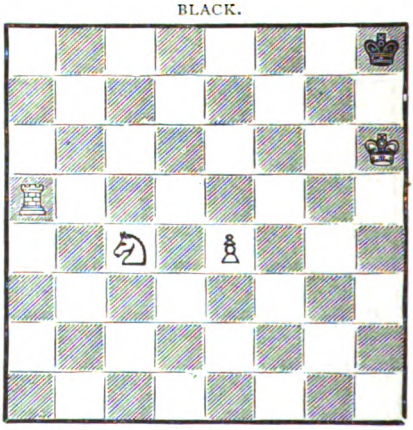

WHITE.

White to play and mate with pawn in four moves.

It is solved by (1) R to K 5th, K moves; (2) R to K 8th (ch), K moves; (3) Kt to Q 6th (ch), K moves; (4) P to K 5th (mate). All Black's moves are forced.

Retractive problems are not popular with the ordinary solver. The specimen given may be termed a conditional retractor. It is by Mrs. W. J. Baird, who for the last few years has made this class of problem a speciality:—

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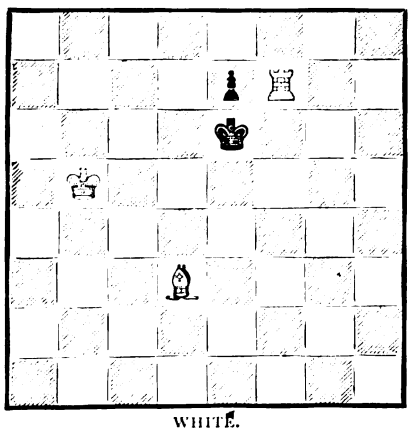


WHITE.

The proposition is, first, White to retract his last move; second, make another move instead; and third, Black plays, so as to allow White to checkmate on the next move. This sounds more like an abstruse mathematical puzzle than anything else.

You first find out—by some elaborate process—that White's last move *must* have been R from B 8th takes Kt, *because it is the only one which will permit of the conditions being fulfilled.* You now retract that move by replacing White R on B 8th and Black Kt on K B 2nd, and move K to B 5th. Then Black plays Kt to K 4th, so as to allow mate on B 5th.

And a very fine mate, too. But it can hardly be called legitimate chess.

The limits of this article will not permit a fuller treatment of the subject. Perhaps enough has been said to further increase the interest in chess problems.

For those who would like to try their skill in solving, a few are given without solutions. They are culled from the works of the different authors, with the exception of No. 1, which has not hitherto been published.

The solutions will be given next month.

No. 1. By B. G. Laws.

White to play and mate in three moves.

White: K on K Kt 7th, Q on Q Kt 5th, R on K Kt 4th, Kt's on K 6th and Q 8th, P's on K 4th and K B 2nd.

Black: K on K 4th, B's on Q R 1st and Q Kt 1st, P's on K 2nd, Q 3rd, K R 3rd, Q 4th, K Kt 4th, Q Kt 5th, and Q B 6th.

No. 2. By S. Loyd.

White to play and mate in three moves.

White: K on K R 4th, R on K 1st, Kt on K Kt 2nd, B on K Kt 3rd, P's on Q Kt 7th and Q R 7th.

Black: K on K R 8th, B's on Q R 1st and K Kt 8th.

No. 3. By Frank Healey.

White to play and mate in three moves.

White: K on Q 6th, Q on K B 2nd, R on Q B 5th, P on Q B 3rd.

Black: K on Q 6th.

No. 4. By G. Heathcote.

White to play and mate in two moves.

White: K on Q R 6th, Q on Q R 3rd, Kt's on K Kt 5th and K 7th, B on Q B 7th, P on K B 2nd.

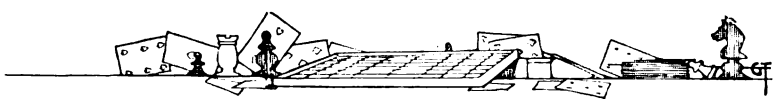
Black: K on Q 5th, Q on K R 7th, Kt on Q 7th, B on K R 1st, P's on Q 2nd, K Kt 3rd, K B 5th, Q B 5th, and K Kt 7th.

No. 5. By Dr. C. Planck.

White to play and mate in two moves.

White: K on Q B 1st, Q on K B 3rd, R on Q R 3rd, Kt's on K B 4th and Q Kt 2nd, B's on K Kt 3rd and Q Kt 7th, P's on Q R 4th, Q R 5th, and K B 6th.

Black: K on Q 5th, B on Q Kt 6th, P's on K B 2nd, Q B 3rd, and Q 4th.



BUCKMASTER'S BOY.

By GILBERT PARKER.

"I BIN waitin' for him, an' I'll git him ef it takes all winter. I'll git him—plumb."

The speaker smoothed the barrel of his rifle with mittened hand, which had, however, a trigger-finger free. With black eyebrows twitching over sunken grey eyes, he looked doggedly down the frosty valley from the ledge of high rock where he sat. The face was rough and weather-beaten, with the deep tan got in the open life of a land of much sun and little cloud, and he had a beard which, untrimmed and growing wild, made him look ten years older than he was.

"I bin waitin' a durn while," the mountain man added, and got to his feet slowly, drawing himself out to six and a half feet of burly manhood. The shoulders were, however, a little stooped, and the head was thrust forward with an eager, watchful look—a habit become a physical characteristic.

Presently he caught sight of a hawk sailing southward along the peaks of the white ice-bound mountains above, on which the sun shone with such sharp insistence, making sky and mountain of a piece in deep purity and serene stillness.

"That hawk's seen him, mebbe," he said, after a moment. "I bet it went up higher when it got him in its eye. Ef it'd only speak and tell me where he is—ef he's a day, or two days, or ten days north."

Suddenly his eyes blazed and his mouth opened in superstitious amazement, for the hawk stopped almost directly overhead at a great height, and swept round in a circle many times, waveringly, uncertainly. At last it resumed its flight southward, sliding down the mountains like a winged star.

The mountaineer watched it with a dazed expression for a moment longer, then both hands clutched the rifle and half swung it to position involuntarily.

"It's seen him, and it stopped to say so. It's seen him, I tell you, an' I'll git him. Ef it's an hour, or a day, or a week, it's all the same. I'm here watchin', waitin' dead on to him, the poison skunk!"

The person to whom he had been speaking now rose from the pile of cedar boughs where he had been sitting, stretched his arms up, then shook himself into place, as does a dog after sleep. He stood for a minute looking at the mountaineer with a reflective, yet a furtively sardonic, look. He was not above five feet nine inches in height, and he was slim and neat; and though his buckskin coat and breeches were worn and even frayed in spots, he had an air of some distinction and of concentrated force. It was a face that men turned to look at twice and shook their heads in doubt afterwards—a handsome, worn, secretive face, in as perfect control as the strings of an instrument under the bow of a great artist. It was the face of a man without purpose in life beyond the moment—watchful, careful, remorselessly determined, an adventurer's asset, the dial-plate of a hidden machinery.

Now he took the handsome meerschaum pipe from his mouth, from which he had been puffing smoke slowly, and said in a cold, yet quiet voice, "How long you been waitin', Buck?"

"A month. He's overdue near that. He always comes down to winter at Fort o' Comfort, with his string of half-breeds, an' Injuns, an' the dogs."

"No chance to get him at the Fort?"

"It ain't so certain. They'd guess what I was doin' there. It's surer here. He's got to come down the trail, an' when I spot him by the Juniper clump"—he jerked an arm towards a spot almost a mile farther up the valley—"I kin scoot up the underbrush a bit and git him—plumb! I could do it from here, sure, but I don't want no mistake. Once only, jest one shot; that's all I want, Sinnet!"

He bit off a small piece of tobacco from a black plug Sinnet offered him and chewed it with nervous fierceness, his eyebrows working, as he looked at the other eagerly. Deadly as his purpose was, and grim and unvarying as his vigil had been, the loneliness had told on him, and he had grown hungry for a human face and human companionship. Why Sinnet had come he had not thought to inquire. Why Sinnet should be going north instead of south had not occurred to him. He only realized that Sinnet was not the man he was waiting for with murder in his heart; and all that mattered to him in life was the

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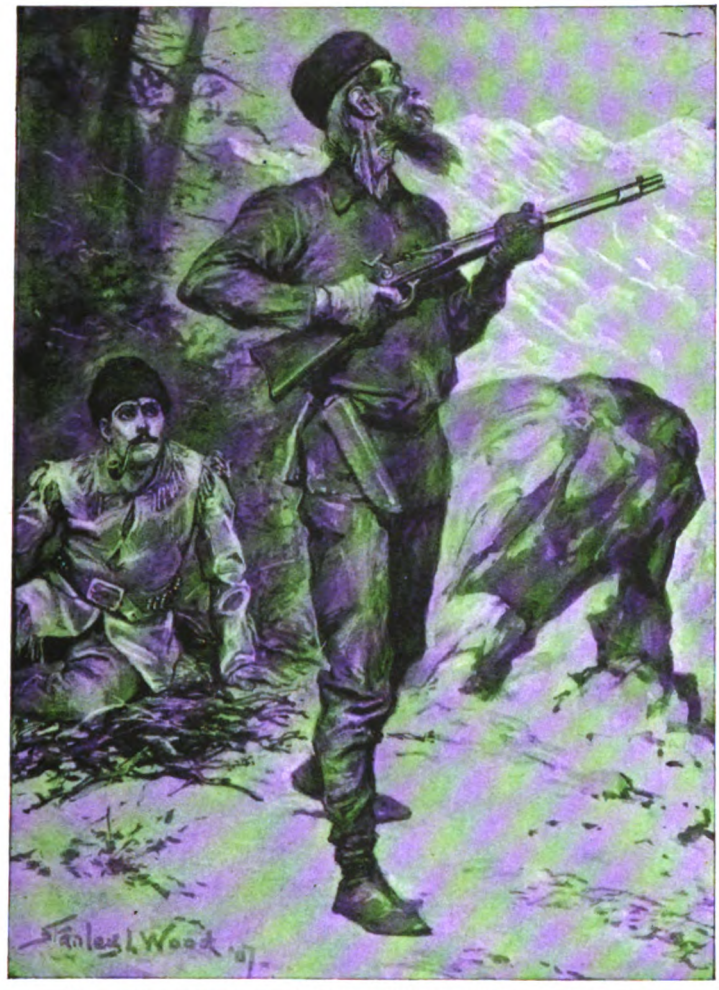


"BOTH HANDS CLUTCHED THE RIFLE AND HALF SWUNG IT TO POSITION."

coming of his victim down the trail. He had welcomed Sinnet with a sullen eagerness, and had told him in short, detached sentences the dark story of a wrong and a waiting revenge, which brought a slight flush to Sinnet's pale face and awakened a curious light in his eyes.

"Is that your shack—that where you shake down?" Sinnet said, pointing towards a lean-to in the fir trees to the right.

"That's it. I sleep there. It's straight on to the Juniper clump, the front door is." He laughed viciously, grimly. "Outside or inside, I'm on to the Juniper clump. Walk into the parlour?" he added, and drew open a rough-made door, so covered with green cedar boughs that it seemed of a piece with the surrounding underbrush and trees. Indeed, the little hut was so constructed that it could not be distinguished from the woods even a short distance away.

"Can't have a fire, I suppose?" Sinnet asked.

"Smoke 'd give me away if he suspicioned me," answered the mountaineer. "I don't take no chances. Never can tell. Nobody's ever lived here, and 'tain't a likely place to camp."

"Water?" asked Sinnet, as though interested in the surroundings, while all the time he was eyeing the mountaineer furtively—as it were, prying to the inner man, or measuring the strength of the outer man. He lighted a fresh pipe and seated himself on a rough bench beside the table in the middle of the room, and leaned on his elbows, watching.

The mountaineer laughed. It was not a

pleasant laugh to hear. "Listen," he said. "You bin a long time out West. You bin in the mountains a good while. Listen."

There was silence. Sinnet listened intently. He heard the faint drip, drip, drip of water, and looked steadily at the back wall of the room.

"There—rock!" he said, and jerked his head towards the sound.

"You got good ears," answered the other, and drew aside a blanket that hung on the back wall of the room. A wooden trough was disclosed hanging under a ledge of rock, and water dripped into it softly, slowly.

"Almost providential, that rock," remarked Sinnet. "You've got your well at your back door. Food—but you can't go far, and keep your eye on the Bend too," he nodded towards the door, beyond which lay the frost-touched valley in the early morning light of autumn.

"Plenty of black squirrels and pigeons come here on account of the springs like this one, and I get 'em with a bow and arrow. I didn't call myself Robin Hood and Daniel Boone not for nothin' when I was knee-high to a grasshopper!" He drew from a rough cupboard some cold game and put it on the table, with some scones and a pannikin of water. Then he brought out a small jug of whisky and placed it beside his visitor. They began to eat.

"How d'ye cook without fire?" asked Sinnet.

"Fire's all right at nights. He'd never camp 'twixt here an' Juniper Bend at night. The next camp's six miles north from here. He'd only come down the valley daytimes. I studied it all out, and it's a dead sure thing. From daylight till dusk I'm on to him—I got the trail in my eye."

He showed his teeth like a wild dog as his look swept the valley. There was something almost revolting in his concentrated ferocity.

Sinnet's eyes half closed as he watched the mountaineer, and the long, scraggy hands and whipcord neck seemed to interest him greatly. He looked at his own slim brown hands with a half smile, and it was almost as cruel as the laugh of the other. Yet it had, too, a knowledge and an understanding which gave it humanity.

"You're sure he did it?" Sinnet asked presently, after drinking a very small portion of liquor, and tossing some water from the pannikin after it. "You're sure Greevy killed your boy, Buck?"

"My name's Buckmaster, ain't it—Jim Buckmaster? Don't I know my own name? It's as sure as that. My boy said it was Greevy when he was dying. He told Bill Ricketts so, and Bill told me afore he went East. Bill didn't want to tell, but he said it was fair I should know, for my boy never did nobody any harm—an' Greevy's livin' on! But I'll git him. Right's right."

"Wouldn't it be better for the law to hang him if you've got the proof, Buck? A year or so in jail, an' a long time to think over what's going round his neck on the scaffold—wouldn't that suit you, if you've got the proof?"

A rigid, savage look came into Buckmaster's face.

"I ain't lettin' no judge and jury do my business. I'm for certain sure, not for *p'r'aps!* An' I want to do it myself. Clint was only twenty. Like boys we was together. I was eighteen when I married, an' he come when *she* went—jest a year—jest a year. An' ever since then we lived together, him an' me, an' shot together, an' trapped together, an' went gold-washin' together on the Cariboo, an' eat out of the same dish, an' slept under the same blanket and jawed together nights—ever since he was five, when old Mother Lablache had got him into pants, an' he was fit to take the trail."

The old man stopped a minute, his whipcord neck swelling, his lips twitching. He brought a fist down on the table with a bang. "The biggest little rip he was, as full of fun as a squirrel, an' never a smile—jest his eyes dancin', an' more sense than a judge. He laid hold o' me, that cub did—it was like his mother and himself together; an' the years flowin' in an' peterin' out, an' him gettin' older, an' always jest the same. Always on rock-bottom, always bright as a dollar, an' we livin' at Black Nose Bend, layin' up cash agin' the time we was to go South, an' set up a house along the railway, an' him to git married. I was for his gittin' married same as me, when we had enough cash. I use to think of that when he was ten, and when he was eighteen I spoke to him about it; but he wouldn't listen—jest laughed at me. You remember how Clint used to laugh sort of low and teasin' like—you remember that laugh o' Clint's, don't you?"

Sinnet's face was towards the valley and Juniper Bend, but he slowly turned his head and looked at Buckmaster strangely out of his half-shut eyes. He took the pipe from his mouth slowly.

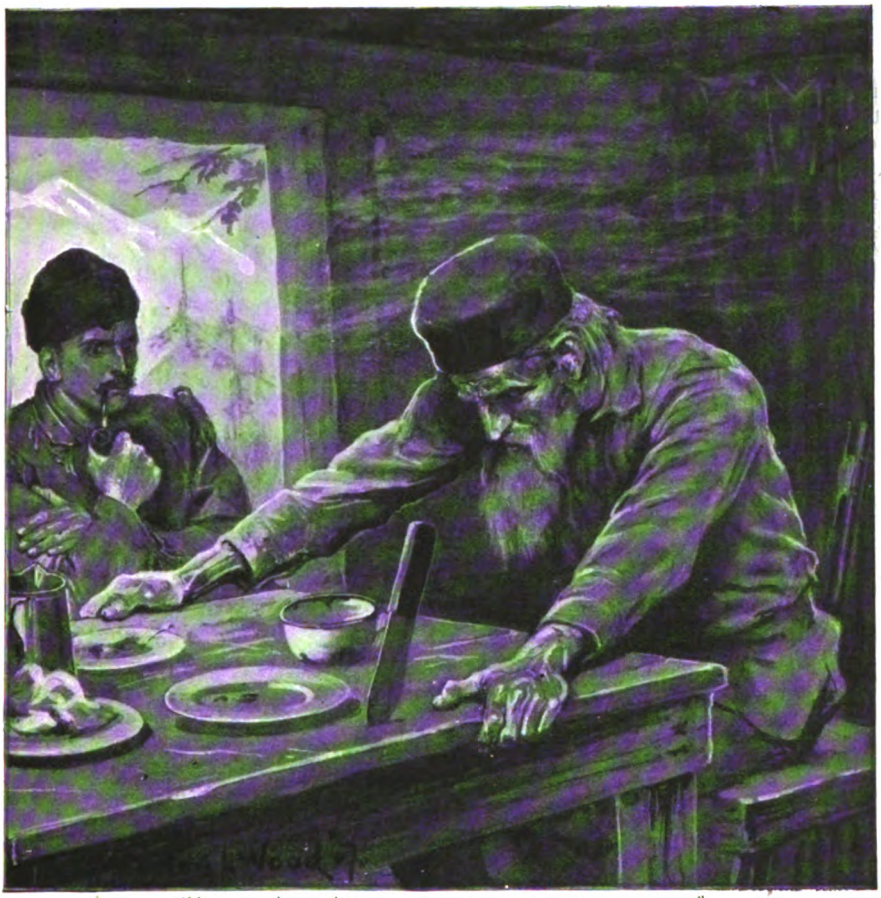
"I can hear it now," he answered, slowly. "I hear it often, Buck."

The old man gripped his arm so suddenly

that Sinnet was startled—in so far as anything could startle anyone who had lived a life of chance and danger and accident—and his face grew a shade paler; but he did not move, and Buckmaster's hand tightened convulsively.

"You liked him, an' he liked you; he first learnt poker off you, Sinnet. He thought you with the serpents of sorrow and hatred which were strangling him.

"Dead an' gone," he repeated, as he swayed to and fro, and the table quivered in his grasp. Presently, however, as though arrested by a thought, he peered out of the doorway towards Juniper Bend. "That hawk seen him—it seen him. He's comin',



"'DEAD AN' GONE,' HE REPEATED, AS HE SWAYED TO AND FRO."

was a tough, but he didn't mind that no more than I did. It ain't for us to say what we're goin' to be; not always. Things in life git stronger than we are. You was a tough, but who's goin' to judge you? I ain't; for he took to you, Sinnet, an' he never went wrong in his thinkin'. God! he was wife an' child to me—an' he's dead—dead—dead!"

The man's grief was a painful thing to see. His hands gripped the table, while his body shook with sobs, though his eyes gave forth no tears. It was an inward convulsion, which gave his face the look of unrelieved tragedy and suffering—Laocoon struggling I know it, an' I'll git him—plumb!" He had the mystery and imagination of the mountain-dweller.

The rifle lay against the wall behind him, and he turned and touched it almost caressingly. "I ain't let go like this since he was killed, Sinnet. It don't do. I got to keep myself stiddy to do the trick when the minute comes. At first I usen't to sleep at nights, thinkin' of Clint, an' missin' him, an' I got shaky and no good. So I put a cinch on myself, an' got to sleepin' again—from the full dusk to dawn, for Greevy wouldn't take the trail at night. I've kept stiddy."

He held out his hand as though to show that it was firm and steady, but it trembled with the emotion which had conquered him. He saw it, and shook his head angrily.

"It was seein' you, Sinnet. It burst me. I ain't seen no one to speak to in a month, an' with you sittin' there, it was like Clint an' me cuttin' and comin' again off the loaf an' the knuckle-bone of ven'son."

Sinnet ran a long finger slowly across his lips, and seemed meditating what he should say to the mountaineer. At length he spoke, looking into Buckmaster's face. "What was the story Ricketts told you? What did your boy tell Ricketts? I've heard, too, about it, and that's why I asked you if you had proofs that Greevy killed Clint. Of course, Clint should know, and if he told Ricketts, that's pretty straight; but I'd like to know if what I heard tallies with what Ricketts heard from Clint! P'r'aps it'd ease your mind a bit to tell it. I'll watch the Bend—don't you trouble about that. You can't do these two things at one time. I'll watch for Greevy; you give me Clint's story to Ricketts. I guess you know I'm feelin' for you, an' if I was in your place I'd shoot the man that killed Clint, if it took ten years. I'd have his heart's blood—all of it. Whether Greevy was in the right or in the wrong, I'd have him—*plumb!*"

Buckmaster was moved. He gave a fierce exclamation and made a gesture of cruelty. "Clint right or wrong! There ain't no question of that. My boy wasn't the kind to be in the wrong. What did he ever do but what was right? If Clint was in the wrong I'd kill Greevy jest the same, for Greevy robbed him of all the years that was before him—only a sapling he was, an' all his growin' to do, all his branches to widen an' his roots to spread. But that don't enter in it, his bein' in the wrong. It was a quarrel, and Clint never did Greevy any harm. It was a quarrel over cards, an' Greevy was drunk, an' followed Clint out into the prairie in the night and shot him like a coyote. Clint hadn't no chance, an' he jest lay there on the ground till morning, when Ricketts and Steve Joicey found him. An' Clint told Ricketts who it was."

"Why didn't Ricketts tell it right out at once?" asked Sinnet.

"Greevy was his own cousin—it was in the family, an' he kept thinkin' of Greevy's gal, Em'ly. Her—what'll it matter to her? She'll get married, an' she'll forgit. I know her—a gal that's got no deep feelin' like Clint had for me. But because of her Ricketts didn't speak for a year. Then he couldn't stand it any longer an' he told me—seein' how I suffered, an' everybody hidin' their suspicions from me, an' me up here out o' the way, an' no account. That was the feelin' among 'em; what was the good of making things worse! They wasn't thinkin' of the boy or of Jim Buckmaster, his father. They was thinkin' of Greevy's gal—to save her trouble."

Sinnet's face was turned towards Juniper Bend, and the eyes were fixed, as it were, on a still more distant object—a dark, brooding, inscrutable look.

"Was that all Ricketts told you, Buck?" The voice was very quiet, but it had a suggestive note.

"That's all Clint told Bill before he died. That was enough."

There was a moment's pause, and then, puffing out long clouds of smoke, and in a tone of curious detachment, as though he were telling of something that he saw now in the far distance, or as a spectator of a battle from a far vantage-point might report to a blind man standing near, Sinnet said:—

"P'r'aps Ricketts didn't know the whole story; p'r'aps Clint didn't know it all to tell him; p'r'aps Clint didn't remember it all. P'r'aps he didn't remember anything except that he and Greevy quarrelled, and that Greevy and he shot at each other in the prairie. He'd only be thinking of the thing that mattered most to him—that his life was over, an' that a man had put a bullet in him, an'——"

Buckmaster tried to interrupt him, but he waved a hand impatiently, and continued. "As I say, maybe he didn't remember everything; he had been drinkin' a bit himself, Clint had. He wasn't used to liquor, and couldn't stand much. Greevy was drunk, too, and gone off his head with rage. He always gets drunk when he first comes South to spend the winter with his girl Em'ly." He paused a moment, then continued a little more quickly. "Greevy was proud of her—couldn't even bear her being crossed in any way, and she has a quick temper, and if she quarrelled with anybody Greevy quarrelled too."

"I don't want to know anything about her," broke in Buckmaster, roughly. "She isn't in this thing. I'm goin' to git Greevy. I bin waitin' for him, an' I'll git him."

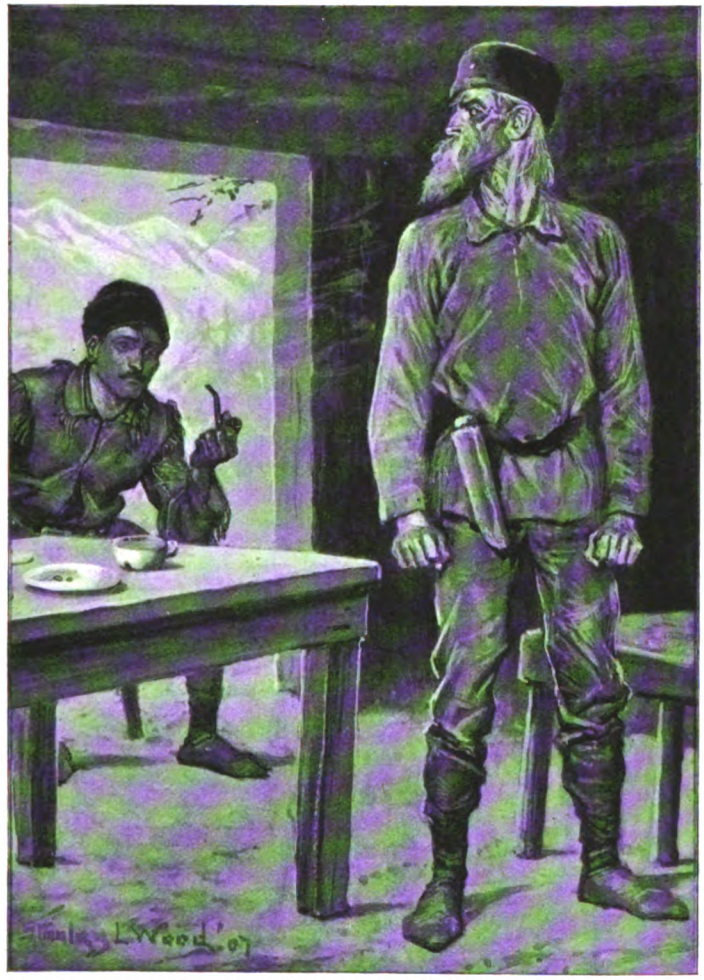
"You're going to kill the man that killed your boy, if you can, Buck; but I'm telling my story in my own way. You told Ricketts' story; I'll tell what I've heard. And before

you kill Greevy you ought to know all there is that anybody else knows—or suspicions about it."

"I know enough—Greevy done it, an' I'm here."

With no apparent coherence and relevancy Sinnet continued, but his voice was not so me about her. She'll git over it—I'll never git over what Greevy done to me or to Clint—jest twenty, jest twenty! I got my work to do."

He took his gun from the wall, slung it into the hollow of his arm, and turned to look up the valley through the open doorway.



"'I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ABOUT HER,' SAID BUCKMASTER."

even as before. "Em'ly was a girl that wasn't twice alike. She was changeable. First it was one, then it was another, and she didn't seem to be able to fix her mind. But that didn't prevent her leadin' men on. She wasn't changeable, though, about her father. She was to him what your boy was to you. There she was like you, ready to give everything up for her father."

"I tell y' I don't want to hear about her," said Buckmaster, getting to his feet and setting his jaws. "You needn't talk to

The morning was sparkling with life—the life and vigour which a touch of frost gives to the autumn world in a country where the blood tingles to the dry, sweet sting of the air. Beautiful, and spacious, and buoyant, and lonely, the valley and the mountains seemed waiting, like a new-born world, to be peopled by man. It was as though all had been made ready for him—the birds whistling and singing in the trees, the whisk of the squirrels leaping from bough to bough, the peremptory sound of the woodpecker's beak

against the bole of a tree, the rustle of the leaves as a wood-hen ran past—a waiting, virgin world.

Its beauty and its wonderful dignity had no appeal to Buckmaster. His eyes and mind were fixed on a deed which would stain the virgin wild with the ancient crime that sent the first marauder on human life into the wilderness.

As Buckmaster's figure darkened the doorway Sinnet seemed to waken as from a dream, and he got swiftly to his feet.

"Wait—you wait, Buck. You've got to hear all. You haven't heard my story yet. Wait, I tell you."

His voice was so sharp and insistent, so changed, that Buckmaster turned from the doorway and came back into the room.

"What's the use of my hearin'? You want me not to kill Greevy, because of that gal. What's she to me?"

"Nothing to you, Buck, but Clint was everything to her."

The mountaineer stood like one petrified. "What's that—what's that you say? It's a darn lie!"

"It wasn't cards—the quarrel, not the real quarrel. Greevy found Clint kissing her. Greevy wanted her to marry Gatineau, the lumber-king. That was the quarrel."

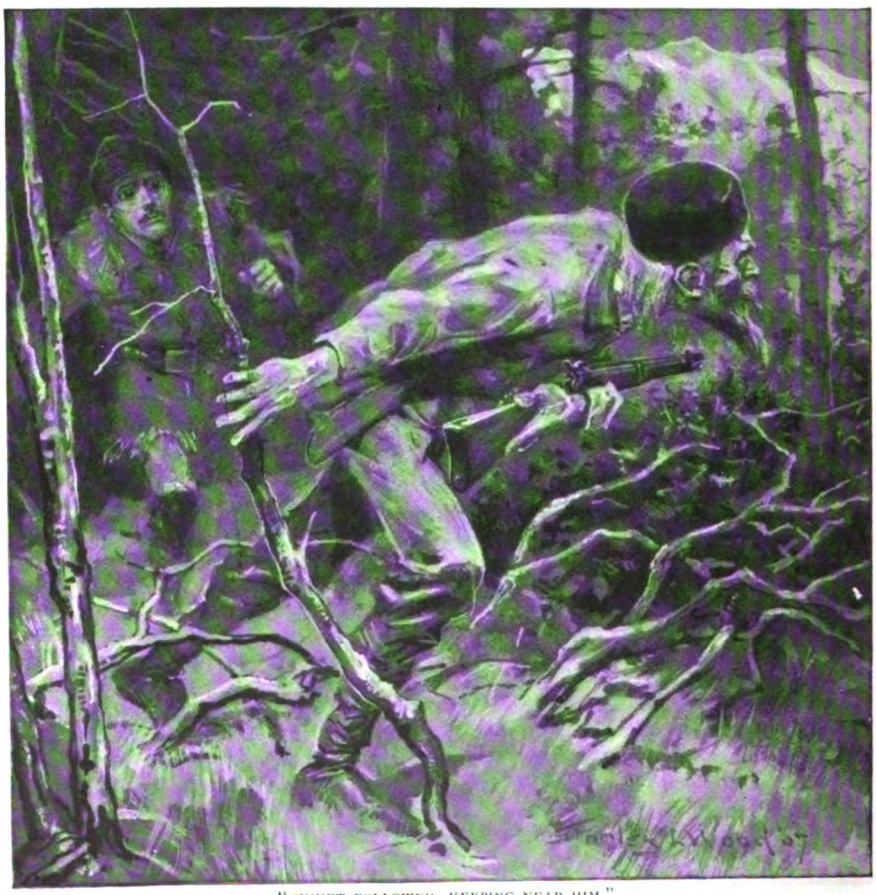
A snarl was on the face of Buckmaster. "Then she'll not be sorry when I git him. It took Clint from her as well as from me." He turned to the door again.

"But, wait, Buck, wait one minute and hear——"

He was interrupted by a low, exultant growl, and he saw Buckmaster's rifle clutched as a hunter, stooping, clutches his gun to fire on his prey.

"Quick, the spy-glass!" he flung back at Sinnet. "It's him, but I'll make sure."

Sinnet caught the telescope from the nails where it hung, and looked out to Juniper Bend. "It's Greevy—and his girl, and the half-breeds," he said, with a note in his voice that almost seemed agitation, and yet few had ever seen Sinnet agitated. Cold delibera-



"SINNET FOLLOWED, KEEPING NEAR HIM."

tion was his chief characteristic. "Em'ly must have gone up the trail in the night."

"It's my turn now," the mountaineer said hoarsely, and, stooping, slid away quickly into the undergrowth.

Sinnet followed, keeping near him, neither speaking. For a half mile they hastened on, and now and then Buckmaster drew aside the bushes and looked up the valley to keep Greevy and his *bois brûlées* in his eye. Just so had he and his son and Sinnet stalked the wapiti and the red deer along these mountains; but this was a man that Buckmaster was stalking now, with none of the joy of the sport which had been his since a lad; only the hatred of the avenger, of the remorseless destroyer. The lust of a mountain feud was on him; he was pursuing the price of blood.

At last Buckmaster stopped at a ledge of rock just above the trail. Greevy would pass below, within three hundred yards of his rifle. He turned to Sinnet with cold and savage eyes. "You go back," he said. "It's my business. I don't want you to see. You don't want to see, then you won't know, and you won't need to lie. You said that the man that killed Clint ought to die. He's going to die, but it's none o' your business. I want to be alone. In a minute he'll be where I kin git him—plumb. You go, Sinnet—right off! It's my business."

There was a strange, desperate look in Sinnet's face; it was as hard as stone, but his eyes had a light of battle in them.

"It's my business right enough, Buck," he said, "and you're not going to kill Greevy. That girl of his has lost her lover, your boy. It's broke her heart almost, and there's no use making her an orphan too. She can't stand it. She's had enough. You leave her father alone—you hear me, let up!" He stepped between Buckmaster and the ledge of rock from which the mountaineer was to take aim.

There was a terrible look in Buckmaster's face. He raised his single-barrelled rifle, as though he would shoot Sinnet, but at the moment he remembered that one shot would warn Greevy, and that he might not have time to reload. He laid his rifle against a tree swiftly.

"Git away from there," he said, with a strange rattle in his throat. "Git away quick; he'll be down there in a minute."

Sinnet pulled himself together as he saw Buckmaster snatch at a great clasp knife in his belt and open it. He jumped and caught Buckmaster's wrist in a grip like a vice.

"Greevy didn't kill him, Buck," he said; but the mountaineer was gone mad, and did not grasp the meaning of the words. He twined his left arm round the neck of Sinnet, and the struggle began, he fighting to free Sinnet's hand from his wrist, to break Sinnet's neck. He did not realize what he was doing. He only knew that this man stood between him and the murderer of his boy, and all the ancient forces of barbarism were alive in him. Little by little they drew to the edge of the rock, from which there was a sheer drop of two hundred feet. Sinnet fought like a panther for safety, but no sane man's strength could withstand the demoniacal energy that bent and crushed him. Sinnet felt his strength giving. Then he said in a hoarse whisper, "Greevy didn't kill him. I killed him, and——"

At that moment he was borne to the ground with a hand on his throat, and an instant after the knife went home—twice.

Buckmaster got to his feet and looked at his victim for an instant, dazed and wild; then he sprang for his gun. As he did so the words that Sinnet had said as they struggled rang in his ears, "*Greevy didn't kill him; I killed him!*"

He gave a low cry and turned back towards Sinnet, who lay in a pool of blood.

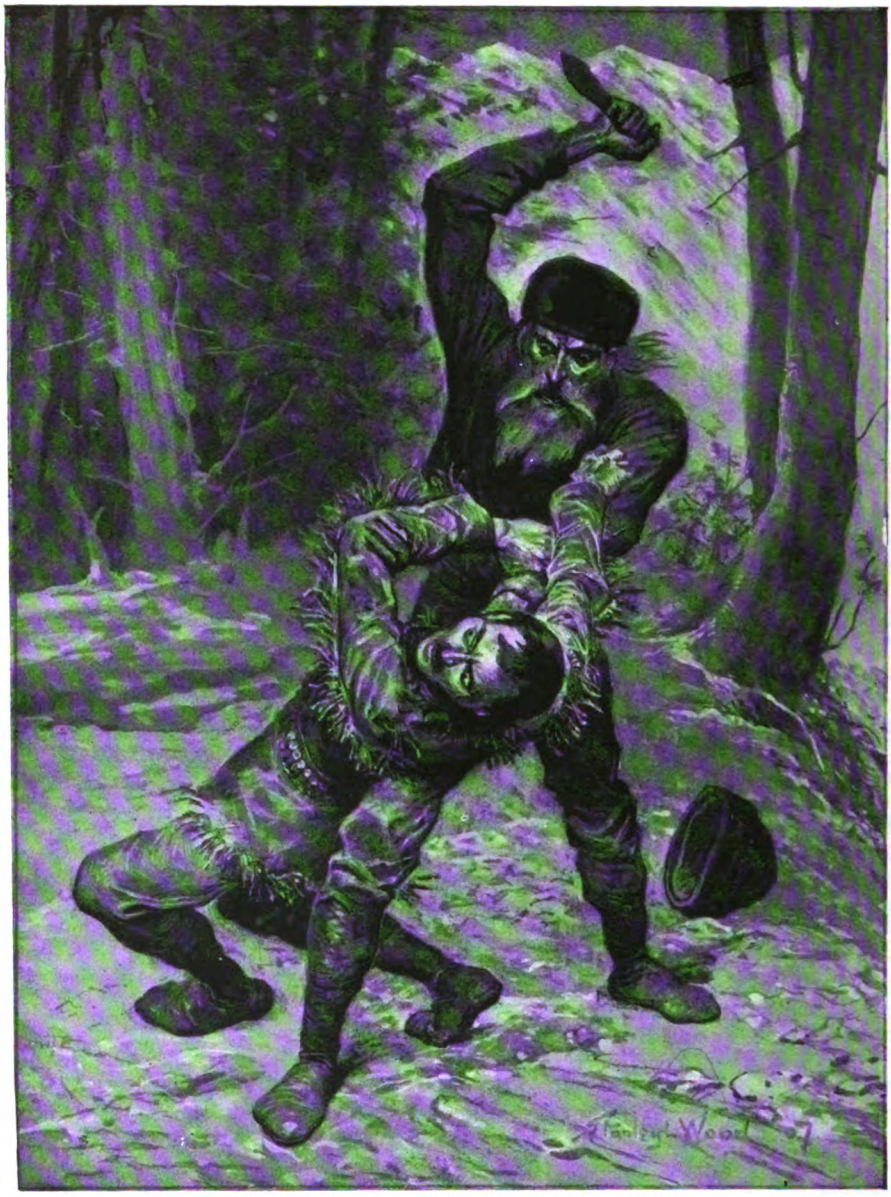
Sinnet was speaking. He went and stooped over him.

"Em'ly threw me over for Clint," the voice said, huskily, "and I followed to have it out with Clint. So did Greevy, but Greevy was drunk. I saw them meet. I was hid. I saw that Clint would kill Greevy, and I fired. I was off my head—I'd never cared for any woman before, and Greevy was her father. Clint had called me names that day—a cardsharp, and a liar, and a thief, and a skunk, he called me, and I hated him just then. Greevy fired twice—wide. He didn't know but what he killed Clint, but he didn't. So I tried to stop you, Buck——"

Life was going fast and speech failed him; but he opened his eyes again and whispered, "I didn't want to die, Buck—I'm only thirty-five, and it's too soon, but it had to be. Don't look that way, Buck. You got the man that killed him—plumb. But Em'ly didn't play fair with me—made a fool of me, the only time in my life I ever cared for a woman. You leave Greevy alone, Buck, and tell Em'ly for me I wouldn't let you kill her father."

"You—Sinnet—you, you done it! Why, he'd have fought for you. You—done it—to him—to Clint!"

Now that the blood-feud had been



"HE WAS BORNE TO THE GROUND WITH A HAND ON HIS THROAT."

satisfied, a great change came over the mountaineer. He had done his work, and the thirst for vengeance was gone. Greevy he had hated, but this man had been with him in many a winter's hunt. His brain could hardly grasp the tragedy—it had all been too sudden.

Suddenly he stooped down. "Sinnet," he said, "ef there was a woman in it, that makes all the difference. Sinnet, ef——"

But Sinnet was gone upon a long trail that led into an illimitable wilderness. With a moan the old man ran to the ledge of rock. Greevy and his girl were below.

"When there's a woman in it——!" he said, in a voice of helplessness and misery, and watched her till she disappeared from view. Then he turned, and, lifting up in his arms the man he had killed, carried him into the deeper woods.

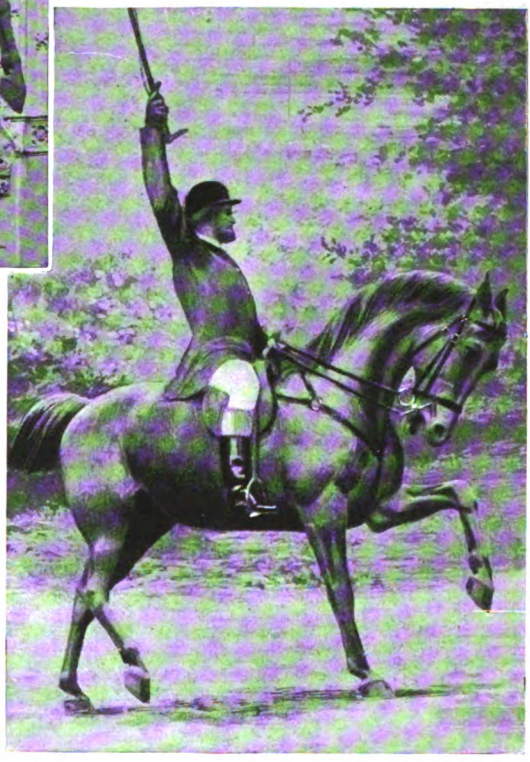
Historical Characters in Modern Costume.

[In the following illustrations the artist has taken the pictures which represent the personages in the garb of their own days, and has merely altered the costume into that of the present time. The faces and attitudes, being absolutely untouched, are therefore identically the same in both cases.]

THE STATUE OF RICHARD CŒUR DE LION AT WESTMINSTER.

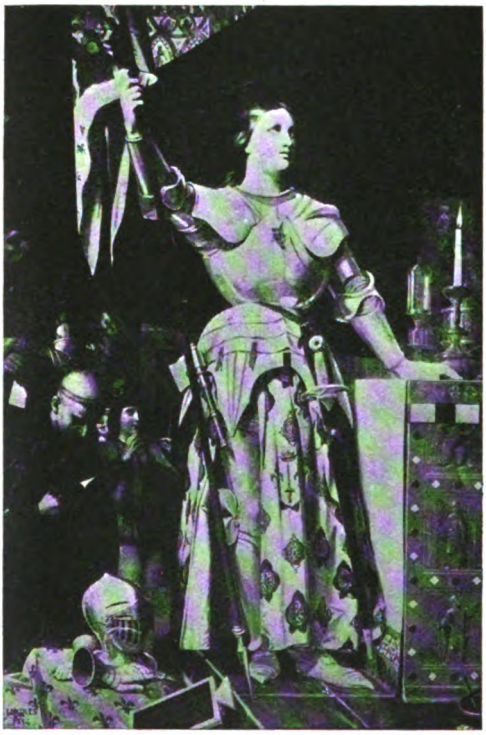
AS Carlyle has shown, the glamour of history owes not a little to costume. Our conception of the characters of such men and women as Richard Cœur de Lion and Joan of Arc, Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth, Shakespeare, Mary Queen of Scots and Charles I., Cromwell and Napoleon, must be very largely influenced by the garb in which, through the medium of picture, print, and statue, they have become familiar to our minds. What kind of impression would these illustrious personages make in the costume of the present day? How would the distinctive qualities with which they are credited express themselves in such garments as they might be expected to assume if now living? It is an interesting question, to which the artist illustrating this article has endeavoured to supply the answer.

It is difficult to assign a picturesque place to Richard the Lion-hearted in contemporary society. We have our crusades innumerable, but none of them, it may be supposed, would appeal to the martial temperament of the King who risked his crown for the sake of a cause. On the other hand, his impetuosity would find little opportunity of displaying itself in the wars of to-day, with long-range guns and rifles, when combatants rarely see each other in a battle. It may



THE SAME STATUE DRESSED AS A HUNTSMAN OF TO-DAY.

well be that only in the hunting-field would Richard Cœur de Lion find any gratification of his reckless valour, and accordingly it is in the costume of a Master of Hounds that our artist has depicted him. It cannot be said that thus presented the equestrian figure altogether suggests the fierce courage of the mail-clad knight; while the uplifted riding-whip in place of the long, straight sword does something further to detract from one's conventional sense of the heroic. And yet, if we look again at the figure on the horse, booted and spurred, with knee-breeches, coat, and hat such as may be seen any day in the country-sides of England during the hunting season, we are convinced that it is that of a man who will dare anything to be in at the death. The spirit of the Lion-hearted survives even this drastic change of dress.



JOAN OF ARC, FROM THE PICTURE BY INGRES.

THE SAME FIGURE DRESSED AS A SALVATION ARMY LASS.

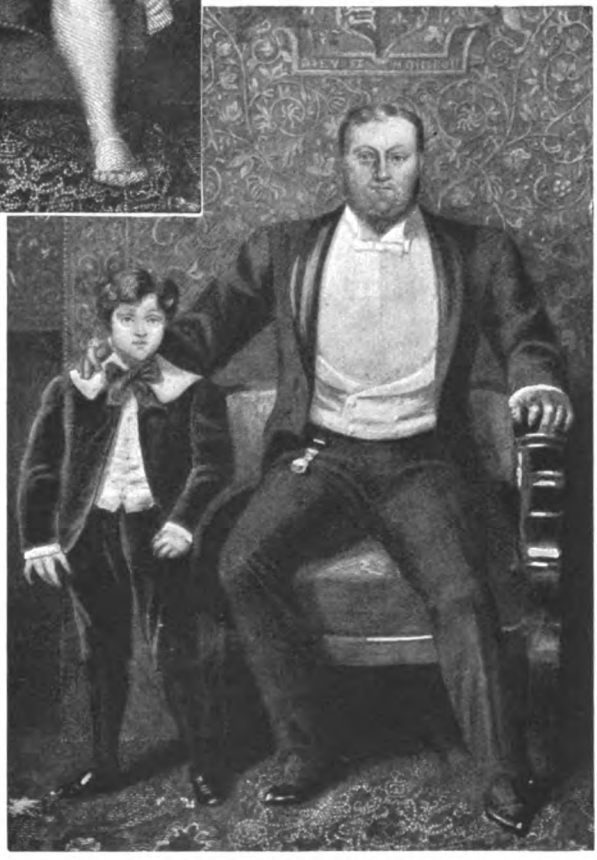
For Joan of Arc only one possible *rôle* at the present day seems possible. She would be a leader of the Salvation Army. Born of humble parents, full of religious fervour, and anxious to serve her fellow-creatures, having none of the weaknesses or vanities of her sex, wanting physical beauty, but with features of serene purpose, she would have made in the twentieth century an ideal successor to the late Mrs. Booth. The transition which the artist has effected from Ingres's picture in the Louvre, showing the Maid of Orleans taking part in the coronation of Charles VII. in the Cathedral of Rheims, seems to be perfectly natural. In place of a coat of armour above a skirt which, according to a medieval custom in feminine dress, is decorated with heraldic devices, Joan wears the plain serge uniform of the Salvation Army. She holds its red banner in her hand instead of the white flag of her own design, having on one side the image of God seated on the clouds and holding the world in His hand. She wears on her head, of course, the typical poke bonnet, and the place of the helmet on the floor is taken by copies of the *War Cry*. In the background the figures of one or two representative Salvationists are substituted for those of priests and soldiers. Joan of Arc was only of medium height, and the change in her costume, perhaps, makes her stature seem somewhat shorter. But it has no such

HENRY VIII., FROM THE PICTURE BY HOLBEIN.

modifying effect upon her countenance, which presents an expression of rapt earnestness absolutely befitting the garb of a Salvationist.

Henry VIII. looks a kingly figure in the regal robes which Holbein has made familiar to us. Garbed in the evening-dress such as he would have worn to-day when attending a private dinner party, with the little page standing by his side, he looks as though he were posing to a photographer. The comparison between the same figure thus differently clothed affords in its way a most striking illustration of how essentially inartistic is the prevalent fashion in "dress" clothes. In his richly-embroidered jerkin, preposterously broad as it is at the shoulders and in the sleeves, fastened round the waist by a girdle to which a dagger is attached, his lower limbs clothed in hose fitting to their shape, and a pair of velvet shoes on his feet, the Merry Monarch impresses, if he does not excite admiration. In the attire which fashion now prescribes for men when assembling together at night he becomes almost commonplace.

The figure of Shakespeare undergoes a most striking transformation by being clothed with the frock-coat and top-hat in which we can imagine him entering His Majesty's Theatre or the Athenæum Club. In this garb, it must be confessed, he looks much more the fashionable dilettante than the man of intellect. Shakespeare's hair is, of course, the physical feature which assorts least well with



THE SAME DRESSED IN MODERN COSTUME.

his present-day costume. The ample growth of hair upon the head, however, which is mainly responsible for the suggestion of æstheticism, had no such significance in Shakespeare's time. Everyone then wore the hair long except the extreme Puritans. Shakespeare, in this matter, merely personifies the normal custom of his time; to-day it

Ascot or Goodwood. She looks just such a young lady as we might expect to meet at these great fashionable functions. In both portraits her costume strikes one as in exquisite taste, perfectly harmonizing with her person; it is similar and yet different. The simple cap and coiffure which Mary affected are replaced by the large picture hat

THE STATUE OF SHAKESPEARE AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

gives him the distinguishing mark of the author or the artist whose work, as a rule, falls far below his pretensions.

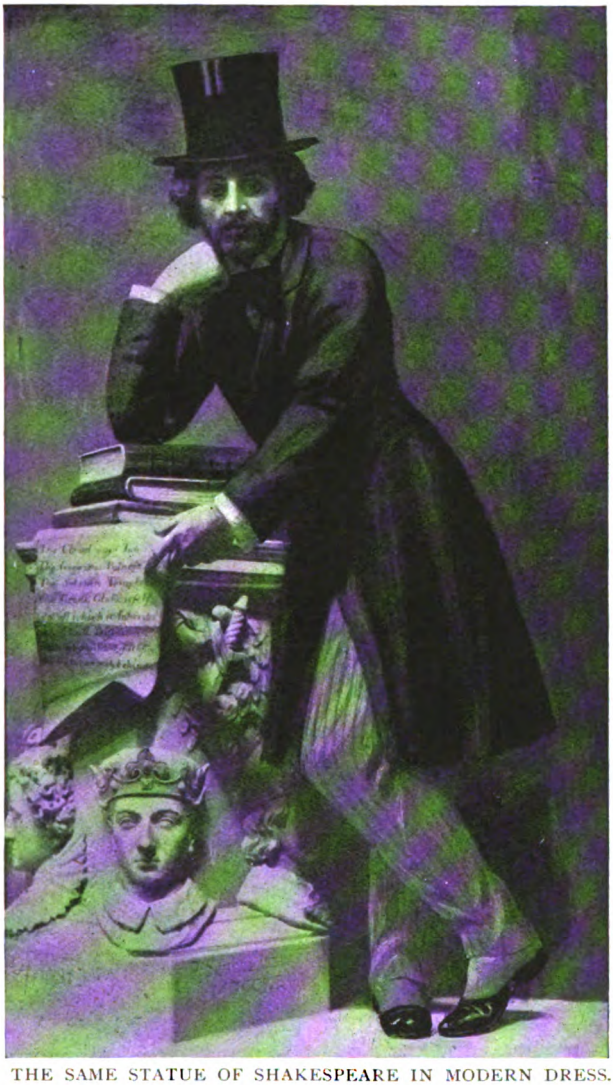
There is a touch of modernity about the beauty of Mary Queen of Scots, which is fully realized when she is presented to us in the costume of a young lady of to-day at

and elaborate hairdressing, which have the effect of concealing the greater part of her forehead and giving the face a less intellectual appearance. But the ruffle has an excellent counterpart in the feather boa, and the hand, which is fondling what looks like a locket, probably containing some love

token, quite as naturally clasps a pair of race-glasses. Mary Queen of Scots in most of her portraits looks the picture of innocence and purity. She appears somewhat more sophisticated, perhaps, in her twentieth-century presentment, but it is almost as difficult to regard this elegant young lady as the author of the crimes imputed to the most unfortunate member of an unfortunate family.

Queen Elizabeth's love of finery has almost passed into a proverb. It is said that she collected two thousand dresses of all nations, and she was constantly changing her costume as caprice suggested. Nevertheless, most people have in their minds a fairly clear idea of how she looked. In the words of Horace Walpole, we picture "a sharp-eyed lady with a hook nose, red hair, loaded with jewels, an enormous ruff, a vaster farthingale, and a bushel of pearls bestrewed over the entire figure."

Where is the present-day equivalent of such a costume? The Court outfit of the grandest of grand ladies who ever attend a Drawing Room at Buckingham Palace? Our artist shows how it falls below the solid magnificence in which "good Queen Bess" ordinarily indulged, her raiment, brilliant with diamonds though it is, looking quite

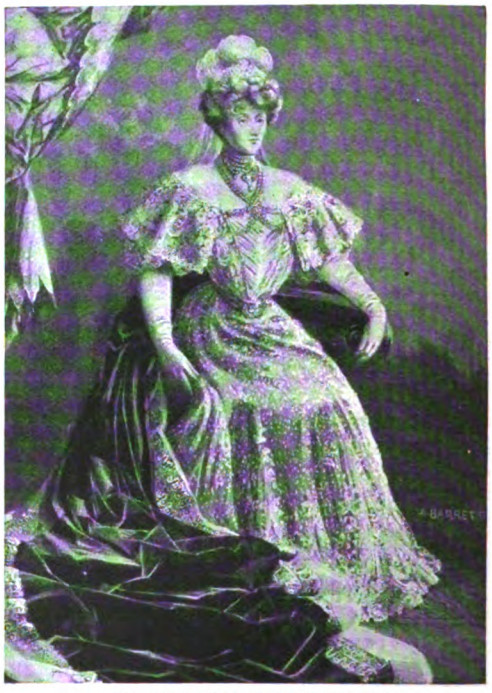


THE SAME STATUE OF SHAKESPEARE IN MODERN DRESS.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS—

—AS SHE WOULD APPEAR AT ASCOT TO-DAY.

QUEEN ELIZABETH—



—IN MODERN COURT DRESS.

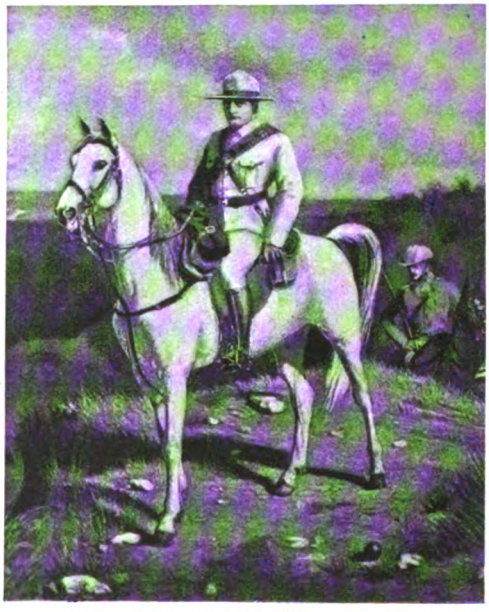
CHARLES I., BY VAN DYCK—

AND AS —A PRESENT-DAY FIELD-MARSHAL.

light and trivial in comparison. Amidst her ruff and farthingale the Queen's face and figure are not attractive, but with the *décolleté* bodice which the Drawing Room rule of to-day would impose upon her they become, to our thinking, if not beautiful, at least softer and more feminine.

Charles I. loses all the romance with which Van Dyck has invested him when shorn of his black silky ringlets and his shiny armour. In the uniform of a Field-Marshal, although mounted on the same handsome white charger, his personality seems to lose all its charm. And yet the uniform of a Field-Marshal in the British Army, as worn by Lord Roberts, for example, is not wanting

NAPOLEON—

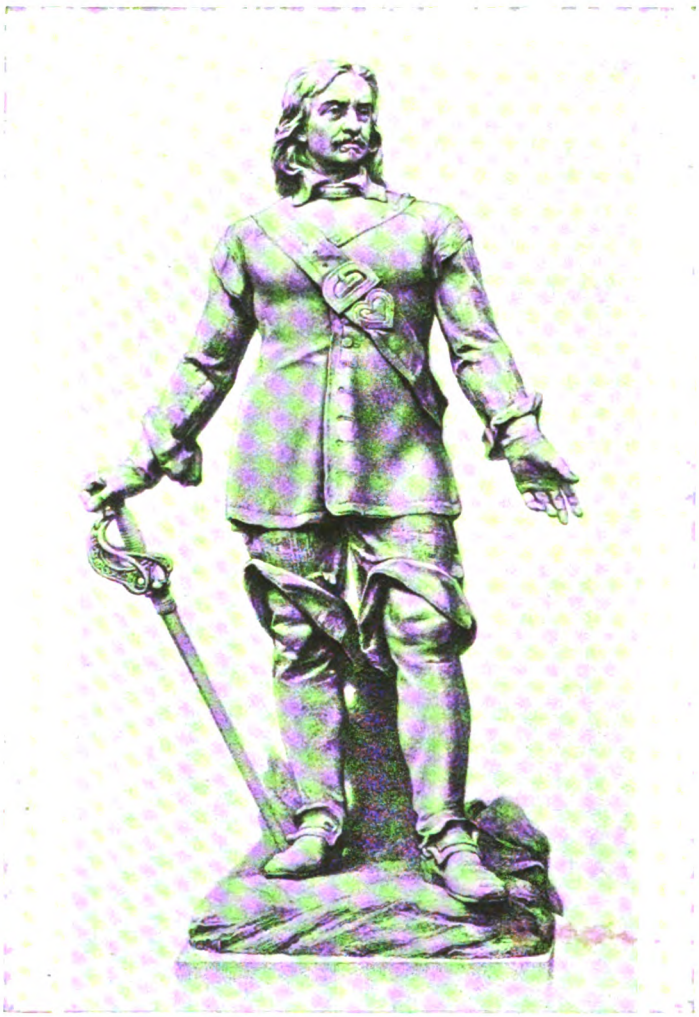


—IN KHAKI.

By permission of Messrs. Goupil & Co.

in the picturesque. The truth would appear that, to be regarded as beautiful, Charles's melancholy countenance required the setting which was given to it by the costume of his time, whether it be the costume of the field or that of the palace.

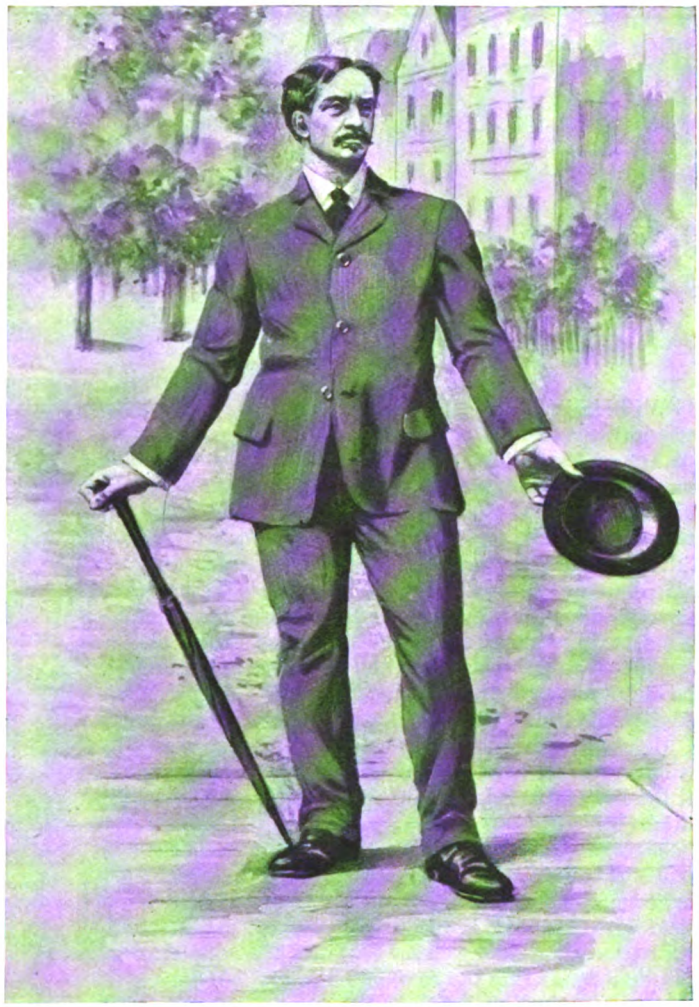
On the other hand, Napoleon on horse-back in khaki is every whit as impressive a figure as in Meissonier's picture, "1814." Probably no articles of clothing are more distinctively associated with an individual than the cocked hat and long cloak of Napoleon. Yet, divested of these, the Little Corporal is recognised at a glance; whatever his habiliments, there is no mistaking the eagle eyes and the firm, stern contour of the face. For the sake of the artistic contrast Napoleon is represented in his present day counterpart as an officer in khaki. It may be doubted, however, whether—if born of this generation — Napoleon would have adopted the profession of arms at all. With his limitless ambition he would have recognised that the greatest world-power was to be obtained neither from military skill nor statecraft, but from the accumulation of money, and to finance he would have devoted a genius for strategy such as might have overwhelmed all the efforts of American millionaires, and have ended in



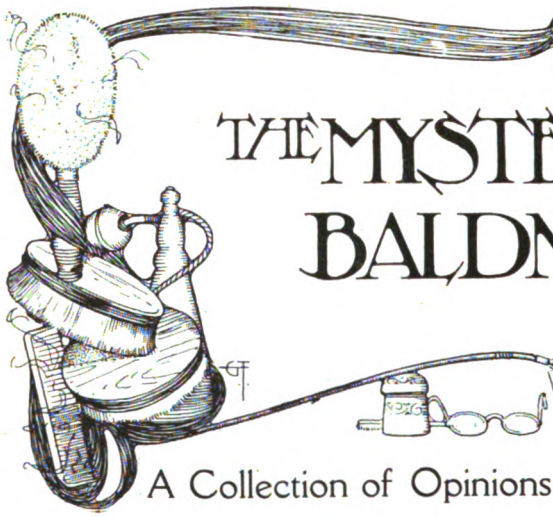
OLIVER CROMWELL AS A ROUNDHEAD GENERAL.

his becoming a Rhodes and a Rockefeller in one.

It is not so easy to assign his twentieth-century part to that other great man of iron will—Oliver Cromwell. But certainly from the tailor's point of view Cromwell has his political parallel at the present day in a Labour leader. Cromwell's features assuredly lose little of their dominant strength as the result of this change of costume. The sculptor has taken a little artistic licence in his arrangement of the hair — although Cromwell was literally not so much a Round-head as some of his colleagues—and the loss of his locks in the second portrait certainly does not weaken the face. The umbrella in the place of the sword has, of course, a modern, prosaic look, to say nothing of the trousers as a substitute for the soldier's leggings. But these details are forgotten when we turn to the face and discern its quiet power as the man, having just removed his hat, is about to address—we can imagine — a meeting in Hyde Park. Yes, Cromwell as a Labour leader looks as strong a man of action as he proved himself to be in soldiering and statesmanship.



THE SAME STATUE OF CROMWELL RE-CLOTHED AS A LABOUR LEADER.



THE MYSTERY OF BALDNESS

A Collection of Opinions.

C. DARWIN.
Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.
Photo. by Lafayette.

RT. HON. WALTER LONG.
Photo. by Lafayette.

LORD HAWKE.
Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the scientific research into the pathology of baldness and grey hairs, we do not seem to be much nearer a solution of the mystery of why one man is bald and the cranium of another is heavily thatched than we were fifty years ago. "There is one thing," once said the great Darwin humorously to a friend, "which comforts me, and that is to be found in the injunction of the children to Elijah." "What was that?" asked his friend. "Why, they said, 'Go up, thou bald head!' and he went up, and so have most bald men ever since. Look at the list of bald Lord Chancellors, if you doubt it!"

Is baldness a sign of degeneracy? That theory is impossible to believe, when one promenades a gallery of family portraits and finds that baldness had characterized a healthy, vigorous family for generations. Let us see if we can discover the reasons why the roof of the brain should so often be left by Nature unthatched. Here are the opinions with which we have been supplied by the most eminent living experts on the subject, and by several well-known personages who suffer from the mystery of baldness.

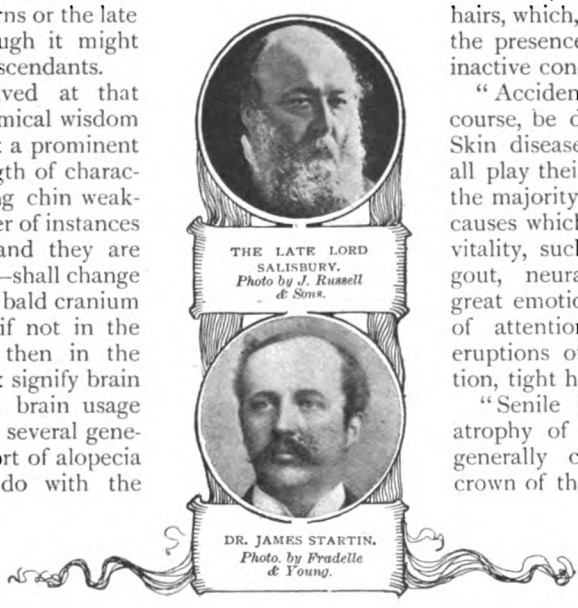
"I do not think sufficient attention," writes Dr. E. H. Luker, "has been paid by science to the physiological condition of baldness. In my opinion the causes of this condition lie deeper than most of the current theories have probed. We have been too ready to assume that all baldness is a mere disease—that it is abnormal, just as if a hook nose, bushy eyebrows, or a double chin were not abnormal! Some baldness is a disease, but what are we to say of baldness which is confined to the cranial dome, which co-exists with luxuriant capillary growth elsewhere on the head, face, and body, and with general vigour and longevity? To my mind it denotes certain inherent qualities of temperament—of organism—which are perfectly natural and consistent with health, strength, and complete normality. The best way to begin our investigations is to look at the class which is most distinguished by this kind of cranial baldness. We find that it embraces the most cultured, the most carefully nurtured,

the most intellectual, the noblest specimens of the human race. It is a mistake to suppose degenerates are bald. I have taken at random one hundred persons in a Salvation Army shelter, including semi-imbeciles, criminals, and consumptives, and found only three who had any tendency to baldness.

"On the other hand, at Aldershot or Ranelagh you may find dozens of splendid physical types as bald as H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught or the Right Hon. Walter Long or Lord Hawke. In these cases the alopecia (baldness) is hereditary, as hereditary as a hook nose or protruding eyebrows. What are the causes which have contributed to such a trait? If no other feature or organ of the body had degenerated, why should we assume that this is a mark of degeneration or disease? In my opinion alopecia bears a direct relation to mental culture and long-continued habits of thought. No doubt exists in my mind that Shakespeare's forbears were men of intellectual power far above the ordinary, that in course of generations they grew bald and transmitted the trait or tendency to their descendant. It is the same with Bacon or the late Lord Salisbury, whose robust physique co-existed with an alopecia derived from fifteen generations of scholars and statesmen; and it is not the same with Carlyle or John Burns or the late Mr. Seddon, although it might be true of their descendants.

SHAKESPEARE.

"We have arrived at that point of physiognomical wisdom when we know that a prominent chin denotes strength of character and a retreating chin weakness, and no number of instances to the contrary—and they are numerous enough—shall change our opinion. So a bald cranium denotes intellect, if not in the actual individual, then in the race. If it does not signify brain power, it signifies brain usage continued through several generations, and this sort of alopecia has nothing to do with the wearing of tight hats, or scalp eruptions, or mental emotion, or senile decay, or degeneracy. As to grey hair, this is admittedly a product of the emotions. Whoever feels, and feels deeply, and sustains many shocks or encounters many vicissitudes, and represses the expression of them, is contributing something to the formative impulsion which inheres in every organism and is transmitted generation by generation. This formative impulsion is responsible for every deviation of the normal type in form of feature, expression, and pigmentation. The materials out of which a snub nose or a double chin is made may go on accumulating unseen for generations, until at last they burst forth in the individual. That is why tendencies are so hard to subvert. The tendency to grey hair is stored in the system; it has been built up by ancestors who were soldiers and sailors and faced the horrors of war, by women who underwent great sorrows, by people who struggled with their emotions and emerged with hale bodies and sound minds, but with the marks of inward battle either on their own crest or on that of their children."



THE LATE LORD SALISBURY. *Photo by J. Russell & Sons.*

DR. JAMES STARTIN. *Photo. by Fradelle & Young.*

"Baldness," writes Dr. James Startin, M.R.C.S., a distinguished authority on dermatology, "may be classed under three heads—hereditary, accidental, and normal (as in old age). The first-named form is somewhat rare, and is seen as downy hairs, which, although they prove the presence of bulbs, are in an inactive condition.

"Accidental baldness may, of course, be due to many things. Skin diseases, scars, and cancer all play their part; but perhaps the majority of cases are due to causes which tend to lower the vitality, such as anæmia, fever, gout, neuralgia, much study, great emotion, indigestion, want of attention and cleanliness, eruptions of the scalp, enervation, tight hats, etc.

"Senile baldness is due to atrophy of the structures, and generally commences on the crown of the head, the hair first turning grey. The skin of the scalp, which is dry skin only,

loses its nourishing fat, and the follicles become obliterated. The change is usually an hereditary peculiarity, some people getting bald early—and it is in the common causes of this early baldness we are more particularly interested—some not until late in life. It is a noteworthy fact that the baldness of old age affects men more frequently than women. Why this should be so it is impossible for me to say, unless it is by their domestic pursuits women's hair becomes stronger.

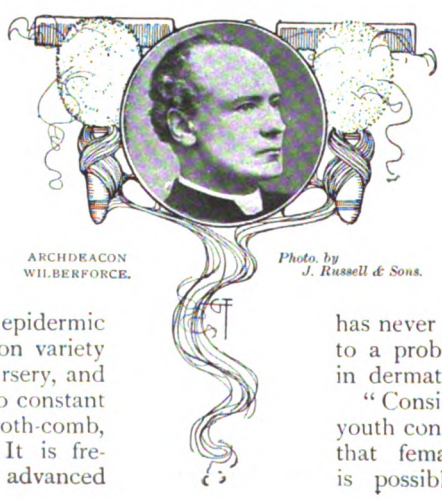
"We now come to idiopathic premature baldness. This is a process of baldness either extending rapidly in weeks or months, or through a number of years. This affection rarely shows itself in juveniles. At first only a few hairs are cast off, then these are replaced by a fine down; this in turn is cast off, when total baldness results. Sometimes the disease may be arrested in its growth and normal hair produced for a period, but the growth is not permanent; and sooner or later permanent baldness results. It generally shows itself about the crown of the head. The cause of this is increase of the connective tissue of the scalp, binding down the tissues beneath, and so exerting a destructive compression on the roots of the hair. Here it is that the pernicious use of the tight, unventilated hat comes in as a cause of compression, so that the nourishing blood supply which goes to feed the hair bulbs is cut off from the skin. We may see for ourselves the red mark a hat makes on the forehead; this is congestion. Baldness begins where the circulation is weakest—on the top of the head. It stops at about the level of the hatband, for below that line the vessels are not compressed.

"One of the commonest and most fruitful causes of symptomatic premature baldness is scurf or dandruff. The disease—for it is a disease of the skin of the scalp—is distinguished by an eruption on the scalp of small thin white scales, which have all the characteristics of the epidermic scales. The most common variety is to be found in the nursery, and is often caused by the too constant use of the hair-brush or tooth-comb, or too much washing. It is frequently seen, however, in advanced life, and appears as a cloud of dust when the hair is disturbed.

"Eczema—from which even old age is not exempt—is another frequent cause of baldness, and is not unseldom brought on by gout. Then, again, all those affections of the skin which cause ulceration necessarily lead to destruction of hair, such as scrofula, tuberculosis, lupus exedens, herpes zoster and morphasia, kerion, favus, erysipelas, and sycosis. These are causes which come more immediately under the eye of the dermatologist, and may be classed among the *uncommon* causes of baldness.

"As a general rule, the hair should be brushed and combed at least twice a day to keep it in good order; the more gentle the friction the more healthy will the skin be, and the less likely will the hair be to fall out. Care should be taken in the selection of brushes. A hard-bristle brush is all very well for a man with a head of hair like a badger, but a nice long bristle, tolerably soft and yielding, is the best for the heads of most men and women. The machine-brush I do not like, as I am convinced that it tears the hair out; and as to the efficacy (so-called) of electric bristle or wire brushes, I confess I am most sceptical. The best combs I know are those made of aluminium, as they can be so easily sterilized by boiling in hot water. Properly-applied electricity I am in favour of."

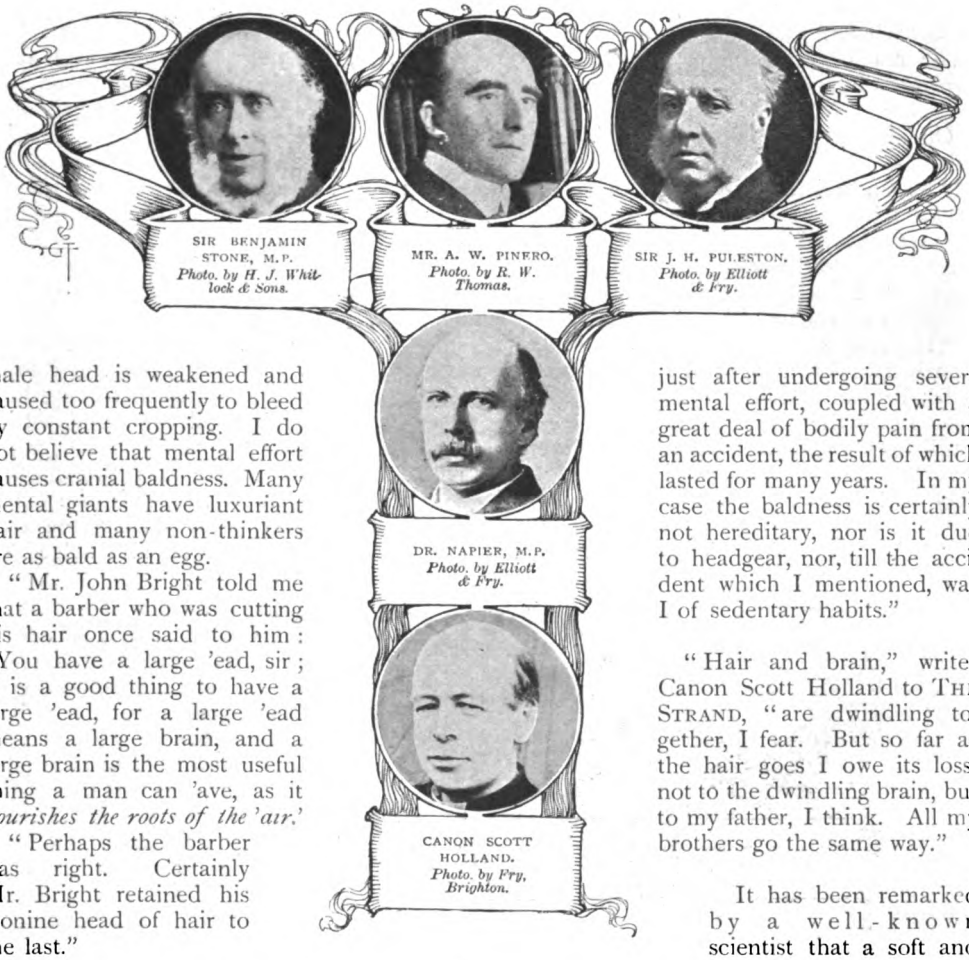
To a number of gentlemen distinguished by cranial baldness who are eminent in the worlds of science, letters, and politics THE STRAND MAGAZINE recently addressed the following question: "Do you hold that baldness is hereditary and inherent, or the result of mental effort, or of sedentary habits, or the wearing of unfavourable headgear?"



ARCHDEACON WILBERFORCE. *Photo. by J. Russell & Sons.*

Archdeacon Wilberforce sends us his opinion as that of "a clergyman, even though 'distinguished by cranial baldness,' who has never given a moment's thought to a problem which baffles experts in dermatology.

"Considering the fact that male youth constantly becomes bald, and that female youth does not, it is possible that hair upon the



SIR BENJAMIN STONE, M.P. *Photo. by H. J. Whitlock & Sons.*

MR. A. W. PINERO. *Photo. by R. W. Thomas.*

SIR J. H. PULESTON. *Photo. by Elliott & Fry.*

DR. NAPIER, M.P. *Photo. by Elliott & Fry.*

CANON SCOTT HOLLAND. *Photo. by Fry, Brighton.*

male head is weakened and caused too frequently to bleed by constant cropping. I do not believe that mental effort causes cranial baldness. Many mental giants have luxuriant hair and many non-thinkers are as bald as an egg.

"Mr. John Bright told me that a barber who was cutting his hair once said to him: 'You have a large 'ead, sir; it is a good thing to have a large 'ead, for a large 'ead means a large brain, and a large brain is the most useful thing a man can 'ave, as it *nourishes the roots of the 'air.*'

"Perhaps the barber was right. Certainly Mr. Bright retained his leonine head of hair to the last."

"Undoubtedly hereditary," writes Sir Benjamin Stone, M.P., one of Mr. Chamberlain's stanchest henchmen; while Mr. A. W. Pinero, the celebrated playwright, expresses a similar opinion:—

"I am bald from heredity. Why other people are bald I have no means of knowing."

"My opinion," writes Sir J. H. Puleston, chairman of the City of London Conservative Association, "is that baldness in the very large majority of cases is hereditary, though excessive mental efforts and sedentary habits and life worries, I should say, count undoubtedly for some bald heads."

"I am afraid," writes Dr. Thomas Bateman Napier, M.P., "I have no theories on the subject of baldness. I began to be bald when I was about twenty-five years of age, just after undergoing severe mental effort, coupled with a great deal of bodily pain from an accident, the result of which lasted for many years. In my case the baldness is certainly not hereditary, nor is it due to headgear, nor, till the accident which I mentioned, was I of sedentary habits."

"Hair and brain," writes Canon Scott Holland to THE STRAND, "are dwindling together, I fear. But so far as the hair goes I owe its loss, not to the dwindling brain, but to my father, I think. All my brothers go the same way."

It has been remarked by a well-known scientist that a soft and loose hat, as opposed to the conventional "topper," is much better for the growth of a good crop of healthy hair, and he brings forward in support of his theory the assertion that Blue-coat School boys, who wear no hats at all, are especially favoured by Providence in this respect. But that even the scholars at Christ's Hospital are not immune from future baldness may be seen from a perusal of the following letter from Dr. Upcott, their popular head master:—

"You ask me," writes Dr. Upcott to THE STRAND, "whether the traditional practice of going without headgear at Christ's Hospital during boyhood has, so far as observation has been recorded, tended in after-life to preserve the scholars from baldness. I am sorry that I have no statistical information to give you upon the subject.

"As far as my own limited experience goes there is no evidence in either direction. The

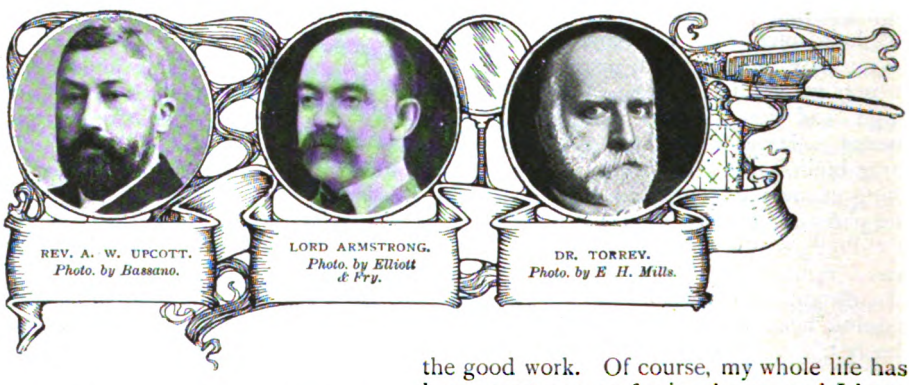
proportion of cases of baldness among former scholars of Christ's Hospital appears to be much the same as among men who have been educated at other schools."

On the other hand, Dr. A. W. Ireland writes:—

"As an old Blue-coat boy, who firmly believes that his hereditary tendency to baldness was arrested in youth by the practice of leaving the head uncovered in all weathers, unprotected save by its natural thatch, I think this practice worthy of general imitation.

"Have you not noticed how the most luxuriant turf, when denied sun and air and water, becomes 'bald'? Are there not bare patches on the lawn which the sun never irradiates? It is the same with the most luxuriant cranial lawn—cut it off from sunlight, and ultimately it will wither away."

"Although," writes Lord Armstrong to



REV. A. W. UPCOTT. *Photo. by Bassano.*

LORD ARMSTRONG. *Photo. by Elliott & Fry.*

DR. TORREY. *Photo. by E. H. Mills.*

THE STRAND, "I cannot claim to be in any way an expert on the subject of baldness, I may claim to have practical experience in the same, as I began to get bald at the age of twenty-one, and I have got steadily balder and yet more bald until I have reached the vanishing point on the top of my head. I cannot say that baldness is hereditary in my case, and, although undoubtedly early baldness is a characteristic in certain families, I should attribute the same, in the absence of a direct cause in the nature of an illness, to various reasons, chief among which I should place sedentary habits, and especially the wearing of unfavourable headgear, the tendency of which is to decrease the circulation of blood amongst those vessels that carry nourishment to the roots of the hair.

"It is a noticeable fact that women are usually much less bald than men, and that those who are accustomed to go about in the open air without a hat are remarkable, as a rule, for their thick heads of hair. I attribute my baldness to more or less sedentary habits and to wearing a hat—not, as I have heard some people attribute it, to an excess of brain-power.

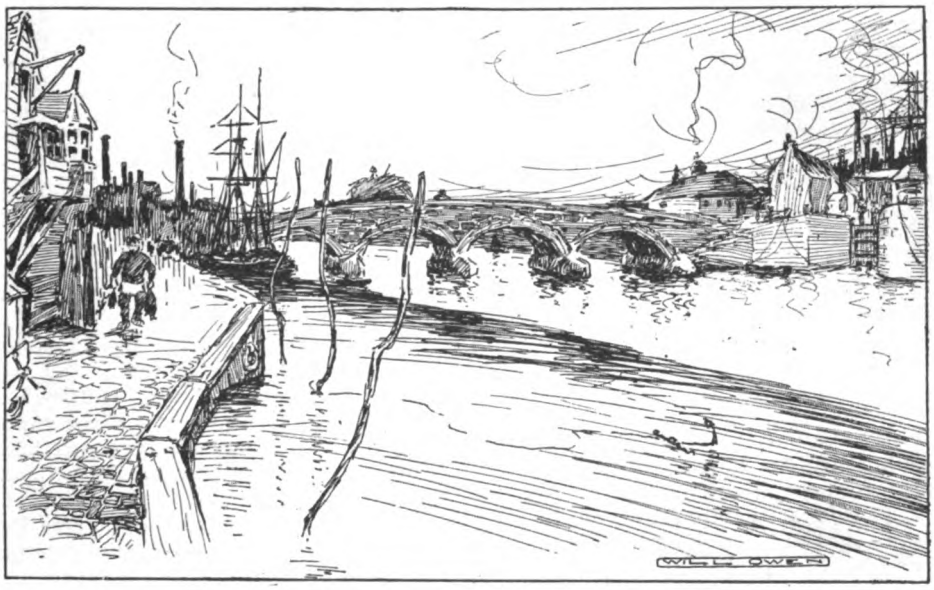
"It would be of interest to hear of people who have grown a new crop on a bald head."

Dr. Torrey, the famous "revivalist," writes: "My baldness is partly hereditary; my father was bald and grey at a very early age. But it was doubtless promoted by the fact that every summer I had my head clipped down to the skin when I was a boy. My hair was very fine and very thick. That was the only way I could find comfort. Another reason I believe to be that I often plunge my head in cold water in the morning, and at other times during the day. Wearing a high-topped hat also helped on the good work. Of course, my whole life has been spent as a professional man, and I have done a good deal of studying, but I think that the other causes had more to do with the baldness."

On the whole, then, the weight of evidence is not that baldness is the result of individual habits or inordinate study, but rather as an inherited condition, derived from generations of men pursuing certain habits deleterious to capillary opulence. Of these habits, hat-wearing is, perhaps, the chief; while, again, persistent intellectual effort is doubtless a large contributory factor. Again, may not many of us now be reaping the baleful effects of the universal wearing of wigs during the eighteenth century? Nature, we know, moves slowly, and the gout of the simple-living curate is surely an unwelcome bequest from a genial and rubicund "three-bottle" ancestor.

SALTHAVEN

A SERIAL STORY.



BY W. W. JACOBS

CHAPTER I.

MR. JOHN VYNER, shipowner, pushed his chair back from his writing-table and gazed with kindly condescension at the chief clerk as he stood before it with a handful of papers.

"We shall be able to relieve you of some of your work soon, Hartley," he said, slowly. "Mr. Robert will come into the firm next week."

The chief clerk bowed.

"Three years at Cambridge," resumed Mr. Vyner, meditatively, "and two years spent up and down the world studying the business methods of other nations ought to render him invaluable to us."

"No doubt, sir," said Hartley. "It is an excellent training."

"For a time," said the shipowner, leaning back and placing the tips of his fingers together, "for a time I am afraid that he will have to have your room. Later on—er—if a room should—er—fall vacant in the building, we might consider taking it."

"Yes, sir," said the other.

"And, of course," resumed Mr. Vyner, "there is one great advantage in your being in the general office which must not be overlooked; you can keep an eye on the juniors better."

"It is cheerful, too, sir," suggested the chief clerk; "the only thing——"

"Yes?" said Mr. Vyner, somewhat loudly.

Mr. Hartley shrank a little. "I was going to say that it is rather a small room for Mr. Robert," he said, quickly.

"It will do for a time," said the other.

"And—and I think I told you, sir, that there is an unpleasant sm—odour."

Mr. Vyner knitted his brows. "I offered to have that seen to, but you said that you didn't mind it," he remarked.

"Just so, sir," said Hartley; "but I was thinking of Mr. Robert. He might not like it; it's very strong at times—very strong indeed."

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"You ought to have had it attended to before," said Mr. Vyner, with some severity. "You had better call at Gillows' on your way home and ask them to send a man up first thing to-morrow morning."

He drew his chair to the table again, and Hartley, after lingering a moment, withdrew to his own room. Ten out of his thirty-five years of service had been passed there, and he stifled a sigh as he looked at the neat array of drawers and pigeon-holes, the window overlooking the bridge and harbour, and the stationer's almanac which hung over the fire-place. The japanned letter-rack and the gum bottle on the small mantelpiece were old friends.

The day's work completed, he walked home in sober thought. It was a pleasant afternoon in May, but he was too preoccupied to pay any heed to the weather, and, after informing a man who stopped him to tell him that he had lost a wife, six children, and a right leg, that it was just five minutes past six, resumed his way with a hazy idea of having been useful to a fellow-creature.

He brightened a little as he left the bustle of the town behind, and from sheer force of habit glanced at the trim front-gardens as he passed. The cloud lifted still more as he reached his own garden and mentally compared his wallflowers with those he had just passed.

His daughter was out, and tea for one was laid in the front room. He drew his chair to the table, and taking up the tea-pot, which the maid had just brought in, poured himself out a cup of tea.

He looked round the comfortable room with pleasure. After all, nobody could take that from him. He stirred his tea and had just raised the cup to his lips when he set it down untasted and sat staring blankly before him. A low rumble of voices from the kitchen fell unpleasantly on his ear; and his daughter Joan had left instructions too specific to be misunderstood as to his behaviour in the event of Rosa entertaining male company during her absence. He coughed twice, loudly, and was glad to note the disappearance of the rumble. Pleased with his success he coughed a third time, a sonorous cough charged with importance. A whispered rumble, possibly a suggestion of withdrawal, came from the kitchen.

"Only his tea gone the wrong way," he heard, reassuringly, from Rosa.

The rumble, thus encouraged, deepened again. It became confident and was heard to laugh. Mr. Hartley rose and, standing on the hearthrug with legs apart, resolved to play the man. He leaned over and rang the bell. The voices stopped. Then he heard Rosa say, "Not him; you stay where you are."

She came slowly in response to the bell, and thrusting a yellow head in at the door gazed at him inquiringly.

"I—I want a little more hot water," said her master, mildly.

"More?" repeated Rosa. "Why, I brought you over a pint."

"I want some more," said Mr. Hartley. Then a bright thought struck him. "I am expecting Miss Joan home every minute," he added, significantly.

Rosa tossed her head. "She ain't coming home till nine," she remarked, "so if it's only for her you want the hot water, you won't want it."

"Very good," said her master, with an attempt at dignity; "you can go."

Rosa went, whistling. Mr. Hartley, feeling that he had done all that could be expected of a man, sat down and resumed his tea. The rumbling from the kitchen, as though in an endeavour to make up for lost time, became continuous. It also became louder and more hilarious. Pale and determined Mr. Hartley rose a second time and, seizing the bell-pull, rang violently.

"Does anybody want to see me?" he inquired, as Rosa's head appeared.

"You? No," was the reply.

"I thought," said her master, gazing steadily at the window, "I thought somebody was inquiring for me."

"Well, there hasn't been," said Rosa.

Mr. Hartley, with a magisterial knitting of the brows, which had been occasionally found effective with junior clerks, affected to ponder.

"I—I thought I heard a man's voice," he said at last.

"Nobody's been inquiring for you," said Rosa, calmly. "If they did I should come in and let you know. Nobody's been for you that I've heard of, and I don't see how they could come without me knowing it."

"Just so," said Mr. Hartley. "Just so."

He turned to the mantelpiece for his tobacco-jar, and Rosa, after standing for some time at the "ready" with a hostile stare, cleared her throat noisily and withdrew. The voices in the kitchen broke out with renewed vehemence; Mr. Hartley coughed again—a cough lacking in spirit—and, going out at the front door, passed through the side-entrance to the garden and tended his plants with his back to the kitchen window.

"'I—I THOUGHT I HEARD A MAN'S VOICE,' HE SAID AT LAST."

Hard at work at the healthful pastime of weeding, his troubles slipped from him. The path became littered with little tufts of grass, and he was just considering the possibility of outflanking the birch-broom, which had taken up an advantageous position by the kitchen window, when a young man came down the side-entrance and greeted him with respectful enthusiasm.

"I brought you these," he said, opening a brown leather bag and extracting a few dried roots. "I saw an advertisement. I forget the name of them, but they have beautiful trumpet-shaped flowers. They are free growers, and grow yards and yards the first year."

"And miles and miles the second," said Mr. Hartley, regarding them with extraordinary ferocity. "Bindweed is the name, and once get it in your garden and you'll never get rid of it."

"That wasn't the name in the advertisement," said the other, dubiously.

"I don't suppose it was," said Hartley. "You've got a lot to learn in gardening yet, Saunders."

"Yes, sir," said the other; "I've got a good teacher, though."

Mr. Hartley almost blushed. "And how is your garden getting on?" he inquired.

"It's—it's getting on," said Mr. Saunders, vaguely.

"I must come and have a look at it," said Hartley.

"Not yet," said the young man, hastily. "Not yet. I shouldn't like you to see it just yet. Is Miss Hartley well?"

Mr. Hartley said she was, and, in an abstracted fashion, led the way down the garden to where an enormous patch of land—or so it seemed to Mr. Saunders—awaited digging. The latter removed his coat and, hanging it with great care on an apple tree, turned back his cuffs and seized the fork.

"It's grand exercise," said Mr. Hartley, after watching him for some time.

"Grand," said Mr. Saunders, briefly.

"As a young man I couldn't dig enough," continued the other, "but nowadays it gives me a crick in the back."

"Always?" inquired Mr. Saunders, with a slight huskiness.

"Always," said Mr. Hartley. "But I never do it now; Joan won't let me."

Mr. Saunders sighed at the name and resumed his digging. "Miss Hartley out?" he asked presently, in a casual voice.

"Yes; she won't be home till late," said the other. "We can have a fine evening's work free of interruptions. I'll go and get on with my weeding."

He moved off and resumed his task; Mr. Saunders, with a suppressed groan, went on with his digging. The ground got harder and harder and his back seemed almost at breaking-point. At intervals he had what gardeners term a "straight-up," and with his face turned towards the house listened intently for any sounds that might indicate the return of its mistress.

"Half-past eight," said Hartley at last; "time to knock off. I've put a few small plants in your bag for you; better put them in in the morning before you start off."

Mr. Saunders thanked him, and reaching down his coat put it on and followed Mr. Hartley to the house. The latter, steering him round by the side-entrance, accompanied him to the front gate.

"If you would like to borrow my roller or lawn-mower at any time," he said, cordially, "I should be very pleased to lend them to you. It isn't very far."

Mr. Saunders, who would sooner have died than have been seen dragging a roller through the streets, thanked him warmly. With an idea of prolonging his stay, he suggested looking at them.

"They're locked up now," said Mr. Hartley. "See them another time. Good night."

"Good night," said Mr. Saunders. "I'll look in to-morrow evening, if I may."

"No use to-morrow," Mr. Hartley called after him; "there will be nobody at home but Joan."

CHAPTER II.

MR. ROBERT VYNER entered upon his new duties with enthusiasm. The second day he was at the office half an hour before anybody else; on the third day the staff competed among themselves for the honour of arriving first, and greeted him as respectfully as their feelings would permit when he strolled in at a quarter to eleven. The arrival of the senior partner on the day following at a phenomenally early hour, for the sake of setting an example to the junior, filled them with despair. Their spirits did not revive until Mr. John had given up the task as inconvenient and useless.

A slight fillip was given to Robert's waning enthusiasm by the arrival of new furniture for his room. A large mahogany writing-table, full of drawers and pigeon-holes, gave him a pleasant sense of importance, and the revolving chair which went with it afforded a welcome relief to a young and ardent nature. Twice the office-boy had caught the junior partner, with his legs tucked up to avoid collisions, whirling wildly around, and had waited respectfully at the door for the conclusion of the performance.

"It goes a bit stiff, Bassett," said the junior partner.

"Yessir," said Bassett.

"I'm trying to ease it a bit," explained Mr. Robert.

"Yessir," said Bassett again.

Mr. Robert regarded him closely. An undersized boy in spectacles, with a large head and an air of gravity and old age on his young features, which the junior thought somewhat ill-placed for such an occasion.

"I suppose you never twizzle round on your chair, Bassett?" he said, slowly.

Bassett shivered at the idea. "No, sir," he said, solemnly; "I've got my work to do."

Mr. Robert sought for other explanations. "And, of course, you have a stool," he remarked; "you couldn't swing round on that."

"Not even if I wanted to, sir," said the unbending Bassett.

Mr. Robert nodded, and taking some papers from his table held them before his face and surveyed the youth over the top. Bassett stood patiently to attention.

"That's all right," said the other; "thank you."

"Thank you, sir," said Bassett, turning to the door.

"By the way," said Mr. Robert, eyeing him curiously as he turned the handle, "what exercise *do* you take?"

"Exercise, sir?" said Bassett.

Mr. Robert nodded. "What do you do of an evening for amusement after the arduous toils of the day are past? Marbles?"

"No, sir," said the outraged one. "If I have any time to spare I amuse myself with a little shorthand."

"Amuse!" exclaimed the other. He threw himself back in his chair and, sternly checking its inclination to twirl again, sought for a flaw in the armour of this paragon. "And what else do you do in the way of recreation?"

"THE OFFICE-BOY HAD CAUGHT THE JUNIOR PARTNER, WITH HIS LEGS TUCKED UP TO AVOID COLLISIONS, WHIRLING WILDLY AROUND."

"I've got a vivarium, sir."

Mr. Robert hesitated, but curiosity got the better of his dignity. "What's that?" he inquired.

"A thing I keep frogs and toads in, sir," was the reply.

Mr. Robert, staring hard at him, did his honest best to check the next question, but it came despite himself. "Are you—are you married, Bassett?" he inquired.

Bassett regarded him calmly. "No, sir," he said, with perfect gravity. "I live at home with my mother."

The junior partner gave him a nod of dismissal, and for some time sat gazing round the somewhat severely furnished office, wondering with some uneasiness what effect such surroundings might have on a noble but impressionable temperament. He brought round a few sketches the next day to brighten the walls, and replaced the gum-bottle and other useful ornaments by some German beer-mugs.

Even with these aids to industry he found the confinement of office somewhat irksome, and, taking a broad view of his duties, gradually relieved Bassett of his errands to the docks. It was necessary, he told himself, to get a thorough grasp of the whole business of shipowning. In the stokeholds of Vyner and Son's steamships he talked learnedly on coal with the firemen, and, quite unaided, hit on several schemes for the saving of coal—all admirable except for the fact that several knots per hour would be lost.

"The thing is to take an all round view," he said to Captain Trimblett, of the ss. *Indian Chief*, as he strolled back with that elderly mariner from the ship to the office one day.

"That's it, sir," said the captain.

"Don't waste, and, at the same time, don't pinch," continued Mr. Robert, oracularly.

"That's business in a nutshell," commented the captain. "Don't spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar, and, on the other hand, don't get leaving the tar about for other people to sit on."

"But you got it off," said Robert, flushing. "You told me you had."

"As far as tar ever can be got off," asserted the captain, gloomily. "Yes. Why I put

my best trousers on this morning," he continued, in a tone of vague wonder, "I'm sure I don't know. It was meant to be, I suppose; it's all for some wise purpose that we don't know of."

"Wise fiddlesticks!" exclaimed Robert, shortly. "Your particular brand of fatalism is the most extraordinary nonsense I ever heard of. What it means is that thousands of years ago, or millions, perhaps, it was decided that I should be born on purpose to tar your blessed trousers."

"That and other things," said the immovable captain. "It's all laid down for us, everything we do, and we can't help doing it. When I put on those trousers this morning ——"

"Oh, hang your trousers," said Robert. "You said it didn't matter, and you've been talking about nothing else ever since."

"I won't say another word about it," said the captain. "I remember the last pair I had done; a pair o' white ducks. My steward it was; one o' those silly, fat-headed, staring-eyed, garping ——"

"Go on," said the other, grimly.

"Nice, bright young fellows," concluded the captain, hastily; "he got on very well, I believe."

"After he left you, I suppose?" said Mr. Vyner, smoothly.

"Yes," said the innocent captain. He caught a glance of the other's face and ruminated. "After I had broken him of his silly habits," he added.

He walked along smiling, and, raising his cap with a flourish, beamed in a fatherly manner on a girl who was just passing. Robert replaced his hat and glanced over his left shoulder.

"Who is that?" he inquired. "I saw her the other day; her face seems familiar to me."

"Joan Hartley," replied the captain, "Nathaniel Hartley's daughter. To my mind, the best and prettiest girl in Salthaven."

"Eh?" said the other, staring. "Hartley's daughter? Why, I should have thought ——"

"Yes, sir?" said Captain Trimblett, after a pause.

"Nothing," concluded Robert, lamely. "She doesn't look like it; that's all."

"She's got his nose," maintained the captain, with the obstinate air of a man prepared to go to the stake for his opinions. "Like as two peas their noses are; you'd know them for father and daughter anywhere by that alone."

"THE BEST AND PRETTIEST GIRL IN SALTHAVEN."

Mr. Vyner assented absently. He was wondering where the daughter of the chief clerk got her high looks from.

"Very clever girl," continued the captain. "She got a scholarship and went to college, and then, when her poor mother died, Hartley was so lonely that she gave it all up and came home to keep house for him."

"Quite a blue-stocking," suggested Robert.

"There's nothing of the blue-stocking about her," said the captain, warmly. "In fact, I shouldn't be surprised if she became engaged soon."

Mr. Vyner became interested. "Oh!" he

said, with an instinctive glance over his left shoulder.

Captain Trimblett nodded sagely. "Young fellow o' the name of Saunders," he said, slowly.

"Oh!" said the other again.

"You might have seen him at Wilson's, the shipbroker's," pursued the captain. "Bert Saunders his name is. Rather a dressy youngster, perhaps. Generally wears a pink shirt and a very high stand-up collar—one o' those collars that you have to get used to."

Mr. Vyner nodded.

"He's not good enough for her," said the captain, shaking his head. "But then, nobody is. Looked at that way it's all right."

"You seem to take a great interest in it," said Robert.

"He came to me with his troubles," said Captain Trimblett, bunching up his grey beard in his hand reflectively. "Leastways, he made a remark or two which I took up. Acting under my advice he is taking up gardening."

Mr. Vyner glanced at him in mystification.

"Hartley is a great gardener," explained the other, with a satisfied smile. "What is the result? He can go there when he likes, so to speak. No awkwardness or anything of that sort. He can turn up there bold as brass to borrow a trowel, and take three or four hours doing it."

"You're a danger to society," said Robert, shaking his head.

"People ought to marry while they're young," said the captain. "If they don't, like as not they're crazy to marry in their old age. There's my landlord here at Tranquil Vale, fifty-two next birthday, and over his ears in love. He has got it about as bad as a man can have it."

"And the lady?" inquired Robert.

"She's all right," said the captain. He lowered his voice confidentially. "It's Peter's sister that's the trouble. He's afraid to let her know. All we can do is to drop a little hint here and a little hint there, so as to prepare her for the news when it's broken to her."

"Is she married?" inquired Robert, pausing as they reached the office.

"No," said Captain Trimblett; "widow."

Mr. Vyner gave a low whistle. "When do you sail, cap'n?" he inquired, in a voice oily with solicitude.

"Soon as my engine-room repairs are finished, I suppose," said the other, staring.

"And you—you are giving her hints about courtship and marriage?" inquired Mr. Vyner, in tones of carefully-modulated surprise.

"She's a sensible woman," said the captain, reddening, "and she's no more likely to marry again than I am."

"Just what I was thinking," said Mr. Vyner.

He shook his head, and, apparently deep in thought, turned and walked slowly up the stairs. He was pleased to notice as he reached the first landing that the captain was still standing where he had left him, staring up the stairs.

CHAPTER III.

In a somewhat ruffled state of mind Captain Trimblett pursued his way towards Tranquil Vale, a row of neat cottages situated about a mile and a half from the town, and inhabited principally by retired mariners. The gardens, which ran down to the river, boasted a particularly fine strain of flagstaffs; battered figure-heads in swan-like attitudes lent a pleasing touch of colour, and old boats sawn in halves made convenient arbours in which to sit and watch the passing pageant of the sea.

At No. 5 the captain paused to pass a perfectly dry boot over a scraper of huge dimensions which guarded the entrance, and, opening the door, finished off on the mat. Mrs. Susanna Chinnery, who was setting tea, looked up at his entrance, and then looked at the clock.

"Kettle's just on the boil," she remarked.

"Your kettle always is," said the captain, taking a chair—"when it's time for it to be, I mean," he added, hastily, as Mrs. Chinnery showed signs of correcting him.

"It's as easy to be punctual as otherwise," said Mrs. Chinnery; "easier, if people did but know it."

"So it is," murmured the captain, and sat gazing, with a sudden wooden expression, at a picture opposite of the eruption of Vesuvius.

"Peter's late again," said Mrs. Chinnery, in tones of hopeless resignation.

"Business, perhaps," suggested Captain Trimblett, still intent on Vesuvius.

"For years and years you could have set the clock by him," continued Mrs. Chinnery, bustling out to the kitchen and bustling back again with the kettle; "now I never know when to expect him. He was late yesterday."

Captain Trimblett cleared his throat. "He saw a man nearly run over," he reminded her.

"Yes; but how long would that take him?" retorted Mrs. Chinnery. "If the

man *had* been run over I could have understood it."

The captain murmured something about shock.

"On Friday he was thirty-three minutes late," continued the other.

"Friday," said the faithful captain. "Friday he stopped to listen to a man playing the bagpipes—a Scotchman."

"That was Thursday," said Mrs. Chinnery.

The captain affected to ponder. "So it was," he said, heartily. "What a memory you have got! Of course, Friday he walked back to the office for his pipe."

"Well, we won't wait for him," said Mrs. Chinnery, taking the head of the table and making the tea. "If he can't come in to time he must put up with his tea being cold. That's the way we were brought up."

"A very good way too," said the captain. He put a radish into his mouth and, munching slowly, fell to gazing at Vesuvius again. It was not until he had passed his cup up for the second time that a short, red-faced man came quickly into the room and, taking a chair from its place against the wall, brought it to the table and took a seat opposite the captain.

"Late again, Peter," said his sister.

"Been listening to a man playing the cornet," said Mr. Truefitt, briefly.

Captain Trimblett, taking the largest radish he could find, pushed it into his mouth and sat gazing at him in consternation. He had used up two musical instruments in less than a week.

"You're getting fond of music in your old age," said Mrs. Chinnery, tartly. "But you always are late nowadays. When it isn't music it's something else. What's come over you lately I can't think."

Mr. Truefitt cleared his throat for speech, and then, thinking better of it, helped himself to some bread and butter and went on with his meal. His eyes met those of Captain Trimblett and then wandered away to the window. The captain sprang into the breach.

"He wants a wife to keep him in order," he said, with a boldness that took Mr. Truefitt's breath away.

"Wife!" exclaimed Mrs. Chinnery. "Peter!"

She put down her cup and laughed—a laugh so free from disquietude that Mr. Truefitt groaned in spirit.

"He'll go off one of these days," said the captain, with affected joviality. "You see if he don't."

Mrs. Chinnery laughed again. "He's a born bachelor," she declared. "Why, he'd sooner walk a mile out of his way any day than meet a woman. He's been like it ever since he was a boy. When I was a girl and brought friends of mine home to tea, Peter would sit like a stuffed dummy and never say a word."

"I've known older bachelors than him to get married," said the captain. "I've known 'em down with it as sudden as heart disease. In a way, it is heart disease, I suppose."

"Peter's heart's all right," said Mrs. Chinnery.

"He might drop down any moment," declared the captain.

Mr. Truefitt, painfully conscious of their regards, passed his cup up for some more tea and made a noble effort to appear amused, as the captain cited instance after instance of confirmed bachelors being led to the altar.

"I broke the ice for you to-day," he said, as they sat after tea in the little summer-house at the bottom of the garden smoking.

Mr. Truefitt's gaze wandered across the river. "Yes," he said, slowly, "yes."

"I was surprised at myself," said the captain.

"I was surprised at you," said Mr. Truefitt, with some energy. "So far as I can see, you made it worse."

The captain started. "I did it for the best, my lad," he said, reproachfully. "She has got to know some day. You can't be made late by cornets and bagpipes every day."

Mr. Truefitt rumpled his short grey hair. "You see, I promised her," he said, suddenly.

"I know," said the captain, nodding. "And now you've promised Miss Willett."

"When they brought him home dead," said Mr. Truefitt, blowing out a cloud of smoke, "she was just twenty-five. Pretty she was then, cap'n, as pretty a maid as you'd wish to see. 'As long as I live, Susanna, and have a home, you shall share it'; that's what I said to her."

The captain nodded again.

"And she's kept house for me for twenty-five years," continued Mr. Truefitt; "and the surprising thing to me is the way the years have gone. I didn't realize it until I found an old photograph of hers the other day taken when she was twenty. Men don't change much."

The captain looked at him—at the close-clipped grey whiskers, the bluish lips, and the wrinkles round the eyes. "No," he said, stoutly. "But she could live with you just the same."

The other shook his head. "Susanna

would never stand another woman in the house," he said, slowly. "She would go out and earn her own living; that's her pride. And she wouldn't take anything from me. It's turning her out of house and home."

"She'd be turning herself out," said the captain.

"Of course, there is the chance she might marry again," said the other, slowly. "She's had several chances, but she refused 'em all."

"From what she said one day," said the captain, "I got the idea that she has kept from marrying all these years for your sake."

Mr. Truefitt put his pipe down on the table and stared blankly before him. "That's the worst of it," he said, forlornly; "but something will have to be done. I've been engaged three weeks now, and every time I spend a few minutes with Cecilia — Miss Willett, I have to tell a lie about it."

"You do it very well," said his friend. "Very well indeed."

"And Susanna regards me as the most truthful man that ever breathed," continued Mr. Truefitt.

"You've got a truthful look about you," said the captain. "If I didn't know you so well I should have thought the same."

Unconscious of Mr. Truefitt's regards he rose and, leaning his arms on the fence at the bottom of the garden, watched the river.

"Miss Willett thinks she might marry again," said Mr. Truefitt, picking up his pipe and joining him. "She'd make an excellent wife for anybody—anybody."

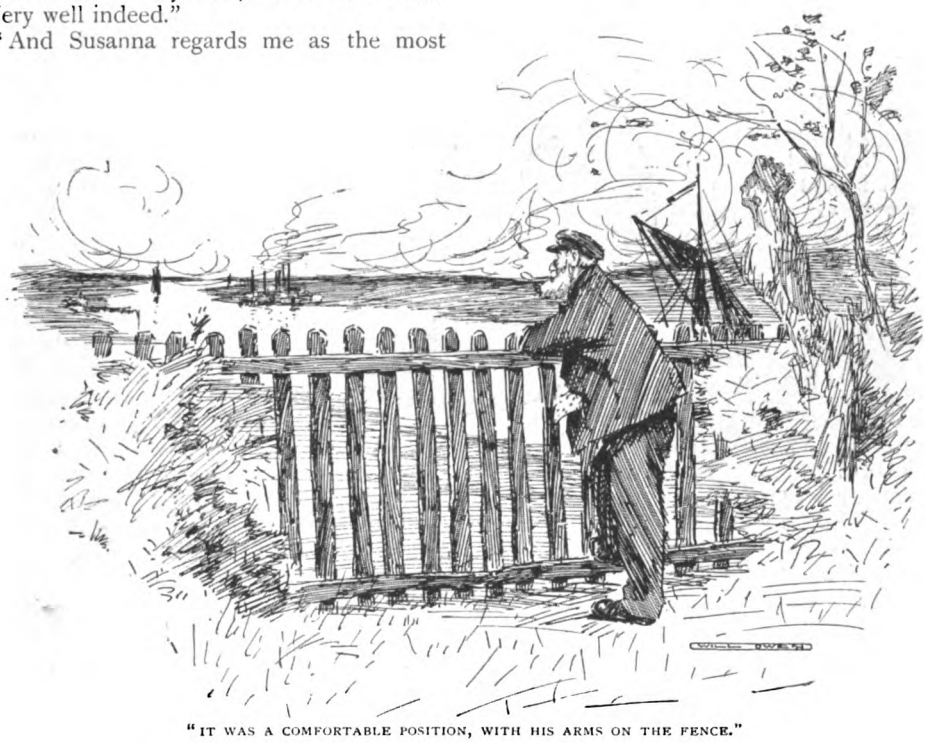
The captain assented with a nod.

"Nobody could have a better wife," said Mr. Truefitt.

The captain, who was watching an outward-bound barque, nodded again, absently.

"She's affectionate," pursued Mr. Truefitt, "a wonderful housekeeper, a good conversationalist, a good cook, always punctual, always at home, always——"

The captain, surprised at a fluency so unusual, turned and eyed him in surprise. Mr. Truefitt broke off abruptly, and, somewhat red in the face, expressed his fear that the barque would take the mud if she were not careful. Captain Trimblett agreed, and to his friend's relief turned his back on him to watch her more closely. It was a comfortable position, with his arms on the fence, and he retained it until Mr. Truefitt had returned to the summer-house.



"IT WAS A COMFORTABLE POSITION, WITH HIS ARMS ON THE FENCE."

(*To be continued.*)

THE PIECE I MOST ENJOY PLAYING.

A Symposium of Eminent Performers.

Mr. I. J. PADEREWSKI.

TWO very favourite pieces of mine are Chopin's Ballade in A Flat and the Fantasie in F Minor. I am exceedingly fond of all the Ballades, for to me they are filled with a beauty all their own, and are as full of meaning as the ballads, or stories told in verse, of which every nation has its share. Chopin tells a story in each of his Ballades, but he expresses himself in music instead of in words, although the meaning is just as clear to those with musical insight as though every note was a word.

The Fantasie in F Minor is perhaps rather a sad piece to choose as a favourite, but it is very beautiful all the same. One seems to listen, in it, to the story of some lover whose heart is lost irrevocably to one who does not requite his affection. Every emotion likely to be felt by such a one is expressed in the Fantasie, and one is carried from joy to despair and from despair to joy again, until one's heart is stirred to its depths by the subtle romance with which the work is impregnated.

MR. I. J. PADEREWSKI.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

Poetry, poetry, poetry! Here is the secret of the ability of any given piece to give pleasure to its player or his audience, and I know no keener enjoyment, so far as music is concerned, than to sit before my Erard and play the Fantasie — independently of whether there is an audience or not.

Herr EMIL SAUER.

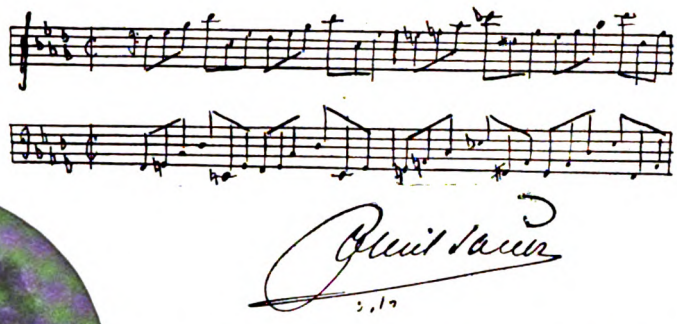
The piece I enjoy playing most is Chopin's B Flat Minor Sonata with the Funeral March. As a piece of interpretation it appeals to me very deeply indeed, and I find it a most exacting piece to play. So entirely lost do I become in the music when interpreting it, that during the Funeral March I seem to see the coffin being borne along on its hearse and the mourners walking slowly behind it, while the *finale* means for me the sound of the wind sweeping through the grass upon the grave.

So intensely do I feel the music that my spine creeps and I become quite cold. I live through it! I see it all quite plainly before me, and although I can play the most tiring and difficult show pieces without getting hot, yet after playing the Funeral March I am invariably bathed in perspiration from the sheer excitement and feeling that the music arouses in me.

During my short tour in England last winter I played several times in Scotland. On one of these occasions the Sonata in B Flat Minor was on the programme. When I came to the Funeral March there suddenly flashed into my mind the remembrance of my little boy, beloved so dearly by my wife and I, who, alas! died a little while ago. On that instant the piece had a new meaning for me. I forgot the concert-hall, the piano, and the audience, and my whole soul went out to converse through the music with my little child. As the piece went on it must have become evident to every member of the audience that I was being carried out of myself, for, although up till then there had been a good deal of coughing, a great hush fell upon the hall, and each note seemed to wake an echoing throb in the hearts of the listeners.

The last two chords of the final movement

seemed to me to gently breathe my dead child's name, and as the last note died away into silence a long sigh of pent-up emotion went up from all parts of the



HERR EMIL SAUER.
From a Photo. by London Stereoscopic Co.

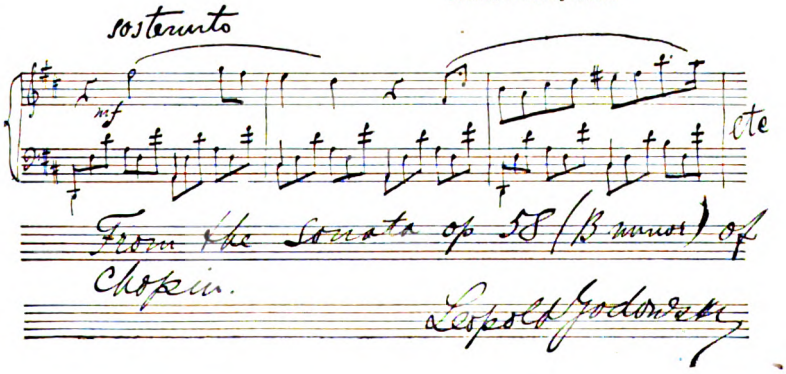
house, followed immediately by such a storm of applause as, I think, has never before been accorded me. Even rough workmen in the gallery, so I was told afterwards, became so filled with the knowledge that something unusual was passing that the tears welled up in their eyes, to be wiped away surreptitiously with their grimy hands or to roll unheeded down their weather-beaten cheeks.

Mr. LEOPOLD GODOWSKY.

To name one's favourite piece would be quite an easy matter if one did so in a merely off-hand way, for it would only be necessary to select at random one of the many pieces the playing of which gave one pleasure. But if one is to reply conscientiously the task is very difficult indeed. The pianist is necessarily a man of moods, and the piece which happens to appeal particularly to him on any given day may not do so twenty-four hours later. Thus, if you were asked on Monday what your favourite piece was, you might name the Beethoven Sonata, because it appealed to the particular frame of mind you happened to be in. Were the question repeated on Tuesday, your choice might fall on something entirely different, and the same thing may be said of every day in the week.

I have always thought that the custom of arranging weeks beforehand what pieces are to be included on the programme of a concert is almost a barbarous one. The man who is used to dining continually at restaurants would utterly resent it were his dinner selected for him two or three weeks in advance. If the powers that be said to him, "On Sunday your dinner will consist of clear soup, filleted sole, stewed kidneys, roast

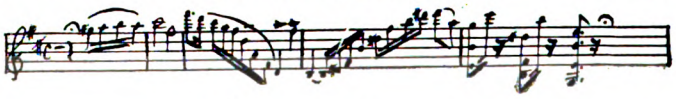
MR. LEOPOLD GODOWSKY.
From a Photo. by Histed.



beef," and so on, and if similar menus were arranged for every day, his life would become a perfect burden to him were he at all fastidious, for when Sunday arrived his fancy might be for thick soup, grilled sole, veal cutlets — in fact, anything but what was on the menu. Even though he himself chose on any given day his dinner for that day a week later he might find, when the time came, that his dinner did not please him. The pianist is in a very similar position. He has to arrange his programmes many weeks beforehand, and he cannot possibly tell whether, on the day of the concert, what he has chosen will appeal to the mood he is then in. The ideal method would be to have no programme at all. He could then announce from the platform whatever he felt inclined to play. In this way he would be ever so much more likely to do himself justice and to please the public than is the case when he is forced to perform many pieces which do not fit his humour.

It is with considerable diffidence, therefore, that I choose as my favourite piece the B flat Minor Sonata of Chopin, Op. 58, and I do so knowing that, were I to choose again a week or even a day hence, my choice might fall upon a different piece altogether.

MISS MARIE HALL.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.



Marie Hall.

Miss MARIE HALL.

From the point of view of the music alone I think it would be exceedingly difficult for any instrumentalist to say that any one piece was his or her favourite, and I cannot help thinking that in almost every case where favouritism exists in an artist's mind it is due to association more than to anything else. At any rate, so far as I am concerned, I must admit that this is the case, and when I name as my favourite piece Paganini's Concerto in D it is because it is associated with some of the earliest recollections of my childhood.

In my early days I used always to be playing this Concerto because the piece is one of great technical difficulty, and is therefore of a showy nature. The playing of such a difficult piece by a little girl never failed to create surprise and win reward, and, as in those days money was scarce, I was frequently made to play this piece before people. When I look back upon the time of my early struggles, and think of the numerous occasions when I and my family would have gone supperless to bed had it not been for Paganini's Concerto, is it wonderful that it should rank very highly in my affections, and that whenever I turn over its pages or play it in private or in public a lump rises in my throat and a tear wets my lashes at the recollections it calls up?

M. JEAN GERARDY.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

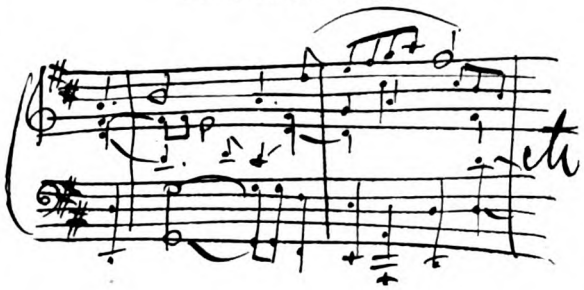
M. JEAN GERARDY.

Of many favourite pieces I may, perhaps, safely accord first place to the "Variations Symphoniques," by Boelmann. The piece is a very fine one, with an orchestral accompaniment, and it is by no means easy, since it requires great power of tone and expression, but it is exceedingly beautiful, and besides being a favourite with myself it is also very much liked by the public—so much so, in fact, that I

include it in my programme very frequently. As to why it is my favourite piece, I must admit that there is a circumstance other than its beauty which makes it very dear to me. In fact, it led indirectly to a reconciliation between myself and the lady who has just recently become my wife.

To let the public into a secret, I may say that when we first became engaged my great love for my *fiancée* soon led me to think that a man had no right to ask a woman to share his life if that life was one of unending travelling and toil such as the life of a musician must be. Bent on sacrificing my love to what I considered my duty, I broke off the engagement. For twelve months we neither saw nor wrote to each other, and then one day, at a concert in London, while I was playing the "Variations Symphoniques," I suddenly became conscious that she was sitting in the front row of the stalls. For an instant our eyes met, and from that moment I played as I had never played before, until I was so moved that all my good resolutions went to the wind, and I determined that the sacrifice I had been trying to make was too great a one. In conclusion, I may say that we met after the concert, when a reconciliation took place.

MR. PERCY GRAINGER.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.



Mr. PERCY GRAINGER.

To select the piece one most enjoys playing is an undertaking that is difficult to master in an off-hand manner. One's enjoyment of music varies so much with one's mood and surroundings that one may appreciate most to-morrow some passage that to-day seems to convey no special message, and vice versa.

When I was ten years old my mother took me to Germany to study music under Professor James Kwast. The morning after our arrival I felt very tired from travelling and my throat was a little sore, so my mother said she would go out and get me some fruit, and asked me what I would like. Fruit! I conjured up visions of vast greengrocers' shops replete with every juicy delicacy under the sun. The first vision showed a row of lordly pineapples, but no sooner had my mouth begun to water for these than they were replaced by an array of mighty melons, which in turn faded away to give room to scarlet strawberries, rosy-cheeked apples, yellow bananas, lustrous grapes, and so on and so on, until I grew quite bewildered and did not know what to choose, and was finally contented with an apple imported from my native land—Australia.

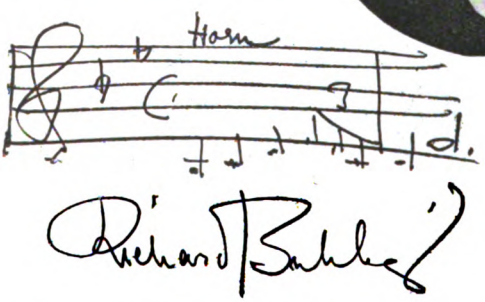
I am torn by much the same feelings to-day when I try to determine what is my favourite piece, but after careful consideration I think I most enjoy playing Busoni's splendidly pianistic arrangement of Bach's big organ Prelude and Fugue in D Major, because of the upliftedness and great-heartedness of its spirit. It is interspersed with delicate, calm moments, and always reminds me of the passage in Kipling's Prelude to the "Barrack-Room Ballads": "In simpleness, and gentleness, and honour and clean mirth."

Mr. RICHARD BUHLIG.

The knowledge as to which is the piece of music I most enjoy playing was brought home to me very forcibly last year, when I was rehearsing one morning at Bournemouth for a concert there that afternoon, which I gave just before leaving England for America. When the orchestra commenced to play it I was moved to an extraordinary degree, for I had not performed the work in public or in practice since I included it on the programme of my first London recital two years before. My thought as the piece progressed during the rehearsal referred to was—"How terrible not to have played or heard it for so long! I have listened to no music for two years!" As a matter of fact, the work I am speaking of, which is Brahms' B Flat Concerto, has peculiar associations for me. I remember very vividly indeed the first occasion on which I ever heard it performed. I was quite a boy at

the time, and, hearing it played in America by Joseffy, received such a wonderful impression that from that moment the whole of my musical ambition was centred in being able to perform it. During the years that succeeded I never lost sight of this ambition. I performed the work for the first time in

MR. RICHARD BUHLIG.
From a Photo. by Histed.



public about four years ago in Berlin, and now each year that passes and each time I hear or perform the work enhances the keen musical enjoyment that it affords me.

Herr FRITZ KREISLER.

I have no hesitation in saying that my favourite pieces, and those that I enjoy playing more than any others, are the Concertos of Beethoven and Brahms, because they are the very finest pieces of music ever written for the violin. No words of mine could express all the beauties that I find in these two magnificent Concertos or all the admiration I feel for the extraordinary genius of these two great masters. Nor do they need any admiration of mine, since their greatness speaks for itself. In the case of the Brahms Concerto there are associations, also, which make it dear to me, for I used to know the great composer in Vienna. But, as for the Beethoven Concerto, it has for me no associations except its beauty.

Mr. MARK HAMBOURG.

I have two favourite pieces. The first is the Fantasia of Schumann, Op. 17; the

From a Photo. by] HERR FRITZ KREISLER. *[Elliott & Fry.*

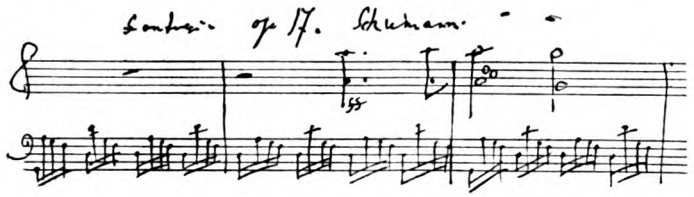
second is the B Flat Minor Sonata of Chopin with the Funeral March. Both of these works depict for me the various periods of a hero's life. In the first case the work is divided into three great sections. The opening *allegro* is fantastic and passionate, based on a restless figure, worried by strenuous syncopated melodies. It is interrupted by a folk-song melody or legend, and, after some development, returns to the main theme. The second part is a *moderato* of mighty chords and massive harmonies, which remind one of a triumphal march, and the final movement is a

lento in which is expressed a restful, peaceful mind.

To an artist's imagination the work is like a canvas on which three periods of a hero's life are painted. In the first he is pictured battling with life, an enormous amount of energy and enthusiasm helping him through; in the second he is depicted as a conqueror, having surmounted all difficulties; while the third shows him living happy and contented, having accomplished his life's work and being at peace with all the world, though subdued and soothing echoes of his great past ever and anon sound in his ears.

The hero I have just described as being illustrated by Schumann in the Fantasia was of the sturdy, undismayable Teutonic kind. Chopin in his B Flat Minor Sonata also depicts the life of a hero, but this time the hero is a Pole. The national characteristic of the Pole is his inability to win success in the face of adverse circumstances. So long as all goes well he is as triumphant as anybody, but the first reverse throws him to the ground. Chopin's hero, then, is a Pole, with overstrung nerves and imagination, to whom the ideals of life are love and war. After great sufferings and defeats he dies in morbid despair. Wonderfully expressed in the *finale* we hear the whisperings of spirits over his grave.

MR. JAN HAMBOURG. MR. MARK HAMBOURG. MR. BORIS HAMBOURG.
From a Photo. by Histed



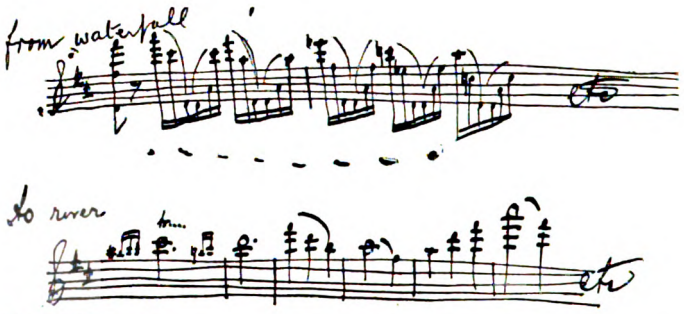
Mr. JAN HAMBOURG.

When I was a little boy I studied the violin with Wilhelmj, and one day I happened to hear him play the Chaconne of Bach. Never shall I forget the effect it had upon me. The deep religious fervour of the music made an impression on me which many years have failed to erase. I at once formed a deep-rooted ambition to be able to play the work myself, and, in addition to studying hard to acquire the technical ability to do so, I even got into the habit of frequently visiting churches and cathedrals in order that I might truly learn to feel the deep spirit of awe and reverence that I knew was necessary for the proper interpretation of the piece. Even to-day I never miss a chance of staying for a while in a cathedral, if there is one in the neighbourhood, and for years past I have constantly spent hours in Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's thinking of the Chaconne of Bach and of the reverent and lofty thoughts it inspires. Thus whenever I play it now my mind wanders from my surroundings and I am for the time being in the dim light of a church, and my playing becomes the expression of my heart's inmost religious thoughts.

Mr. BORIS HAMBOURG.

My favourite piece is Tschaikovsky's "Variations sur un Thème Rococo," partly because of the infinite variety and beauty of the work, and partly because it appeals particularly to the Slavonic temperament and is full of peculiar Slavonic melody and fire. Each movement, too, presents such a contrast to the rest that in playing the piece one runs through the gamut of the emotions. So realistic is it that almost every bar conjures up a picture to the mind's eye. Thus in the last movement one seems to see the Cossacks rushing over the steppes, while

the movement before paints a picture of a lover serenading his lady in a garden of sweet-smelling flowers with the moonlight streaming down upon them.



Mr. MISCHA ELMAN.

It is well-nigh impossible for me to say what piece I most enjoy playing; indeed,

MR. MISCHA ELMAN.
From a Photo. by Mason.

Mischa Elman

this is a question I have often been asked, but have never been able to reply to satisfactorily One's very ability to render any given work depends very largely on one's state of mind. Thus, if the Beethoven Concerto seemed to me to-day my favourite work, that would be because it happened to appeal for the moment to my state of mind, and if I set about playing it while that state of mind lasted my interpretation would be all right. But if I set about playing it to-morrow it might not appeal so much to my then state of mind, and the result would be that I should play it simply horribly! While I find it difficult to name a given piece as my favourite, however, I can name a particular passage in the Brahms Concerto of which I am very fond indeed. This is the principal theme of the first movement. I can never play it without having before my eyes the vision of some huge waterfall which, after tumbling with a roar over a vast precipice, foams through the rapids and gradually quiets down until it reaches a vast and calm sea.

M. VLADIMIR DE PACHMANN.

How can I choose my favourite piece? *C'est impossible!* It is out of the question! It is a monstrous proposition! For I love all music, and I play all music equally well. Chopin? Yes, it is beautiful; but I will not choose Chopin because it annoys me so that the public seem invariably to associate me with the music of that master, as though I could not play all masters. Ah, how can I choose? My mind wanders from one piece to another, like a bee that flits from flower to flower and gathers honey from each. As I think of the exquisite music of Weber I am on the point of selecting some piece of his, when suddenly in my ear there comes the sound of some of Strauss's charming waltzes. Think of it; five different waltzes embodied in one, and all played at the same time! No one but myself can play it!

Yet perhaps I love best of all the arrangements of Godowsky—every one superb, *magnifique*, *colossal!* I will not choose any one of them, for I love and admire them all, but I will merely select as my favourites the unique arrangements of my friend, the great Godowsky.

M. VLADIMIR DE PACHMANN.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

THE CARLING CURE.

By EDGAR JEPSON.

THE two men facing one another across the white and gleaming table presented an uncommonly complete contrast. Halliburton, big, long-limbed, sleek, with the full fed air of the self-indulgent, was the very type of the Man about Town. Presently his face would grow puffy and bloated, its florid complexion would fade, the nose would thicken, the chin would crease under the heavy jaw, the skin would sag into pouches under the eyes; at the moment he was in the very ripeness of his sleek, hot-house perfection. An idler with ten thousand a year, with no taste for sport or travel, for nearly ten years intrigue had been the main pursuit of his life. It had been a panorama of love affairs, mostly discreditable.

His host, Mr. Carling, was of a very different type. Slight, with clean cut, small features, lean head, and arresting grey eyes, of a pallor almost ascetic, he looked the man of taste and intelligence report held him to be.

Halliburton would not have been dining with him but that, loafer as he was, on the pursuit of his life he could spend infinite pains. He believed himself to be in love with Elsie Browning, Mr. Carling's married daughter; and he believed her to be falling in love with him. He had therefore accepted her father's invitation to dine quietly with him, boring as such a dinner must be, with alacrity. An acquaintance with her father was likely to give him further opportunities of meeting the daughter.

But the dinner had by no means been the tiresome affair Halliburton had looked to find it. His host had neither wearied him with matters intellectual, nor, enthusiastic collector of Oriental china as he was, with talk of his hobby. He had talked to him as one man of the world to another, keeping the conversation on the subject in which his guest showed himself to be chiefly interested —women. Mr. Carling had not talked much himself, indeed; but he had proved to be an uncommonly appreciative and stimulating listener. Halliburton could always talk well on that subject, and he knew it. But he had never before known himself so brilliant and illuminating. Mr. Carling's unflagging interest and pregnant suggestions had led him to surpass himself. In his self-satisfaction he felt very kindly towards the old man.

After the butler had brought in the coffee and they had lighted their cigars there came a break in their talk. Halliburton stretched out his long legs with a sigh of luxurious content, for he had dined very well; and the coffee and the cigar were of the proper crowning excellence. He fell into the pleasant, musing mood such a dinner induces, and Elsie Browning's beautiful face, faintly flushed to the tenderness in his tones, as he had seen it in the firelight the evening before, was present to his mind with a very vivid clearness. He assured himself that things were going his way.

Absorbed in his musing, he was but dimly aware that his host rose, went quietly to a cabinet on the other side of the room, opened a drawer, and took something from it. But the click of a lock roused him, and he turned his head to see Mr. Carling draw the key of the door of the room from the keyhole and slip it into his pocket.

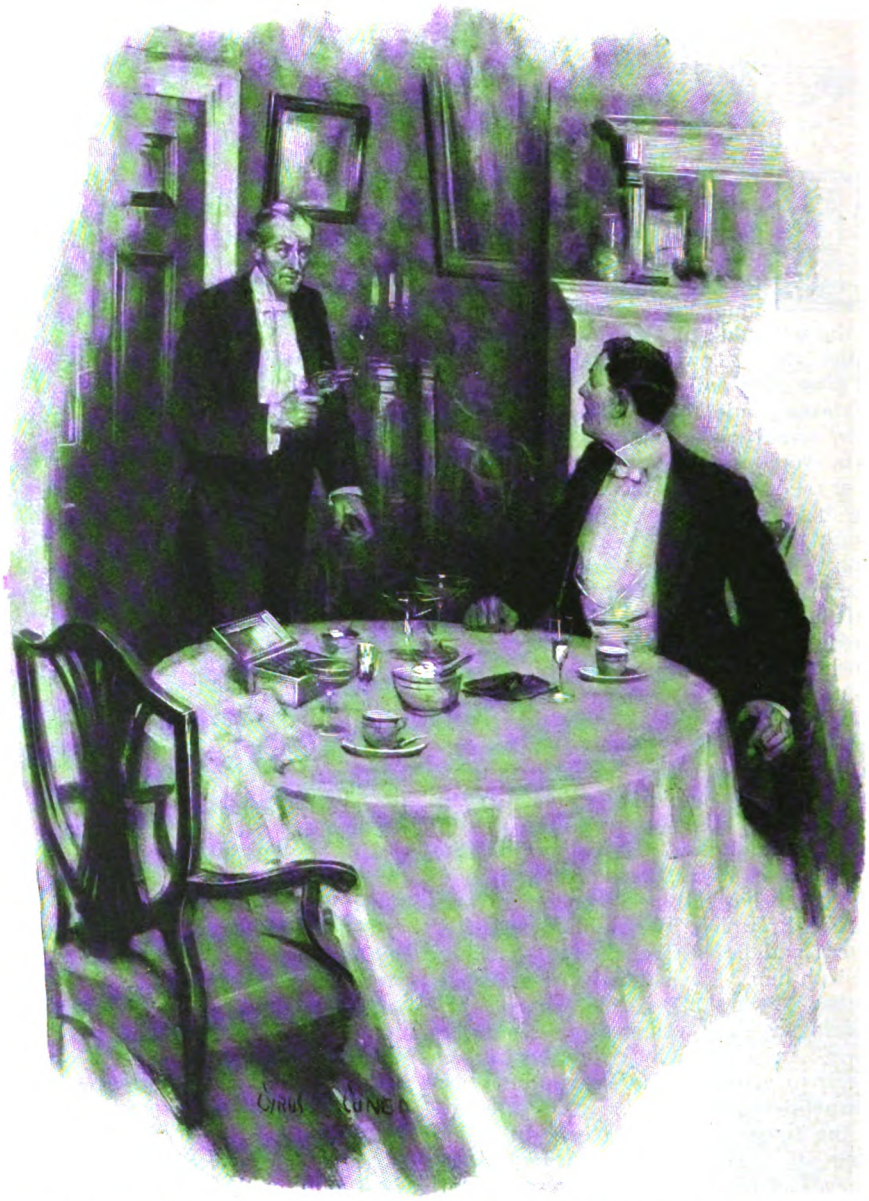
He started in his chair. Mr. Carling turned quickly and said, in his gentle, precise voice, "Please sit still, or I shall shoot you."

The electric light glimmered on the barrel of a revolver. Halliburton sat still; but he sat upright.

"I have fired over a thousand shots from this revolver during the last fortnight; and you would be surprised how accomplished in its use I have grown," said Mr. Carling in an agreeable tone. "I could hit you anywhere. It is a really trustworthy weapon. The advertisements describe it as 'thoroughbred' —an odd epithet to apply to a revolver, don't you think? And if you do stir, I will shoot you in the stomach—three times. My doctor assures me that some of the complications from such wounds produce excruciating pain."

Halliburton was by now believing his ears. He stared at his host with amazed eyes. There was an undertone of grim resolve in Mr. Carling's gentle voice that chilled him; his eyes, burning with the glow of a smouldering fire, were even more chilling.

Still covering Halliburton with the revolver,



"MR. CARLING TURNED QUICKLY AND SAID, IN HIS GENTLE, PRECISE VOICE, 'PLEASE SIT STILL, OR I SHALL SHOOT YOU.'"

Mr. Carling sat quietly down in his chair and laid on the table a Louis Quinze snuff-box.

"It would disarrange my life very much to shoot you, as you doubtless feel, Mr. Halliburton." He continued in the same even tones. "The action would doubtless be ascribed to homicidal mania, due to my failing faculties, and I should be put under restraint. But I am a rich man, and I have no doubt that my captivity could be made tolerable—tolerable."

"B-b-but what's it all a-b-b-bout?" stammered Halliburton.

"Ah, you find me garrulous, I see. But you must make allowances for age. We old men love to prattle, like children. None the less I have been speaking to the point. I am trying to make it clear to you that you are going to do exactly as I tell

you, or I will shoot you. Do you grasp that fact?"

The undertone of menace suddenly rose dominant and insistent.

"Yes—yes—but what's it all about?" said Halliburton, huskily, with a sinking heart.

"I am coming to that," said Mr. Carling; and his tone was again careless and agreeable. "I am an old man, Mr. Halliburton; and old men have their weaknesses. They lack the robust selfishness of young men like yourself. My weakness—one of my weaknesses—is my daughter."

There came a sharp, gasping sigh from Halliburton.

Mr. Carling paused, with an air of polite interest, for him to speak. But he said nothing; his dread was crystallized by the word, and a cold chill ran down his spine.

"For some time I have observed, with a distaste you would hardly understand, that you have been making love to my daughter," said Mr. Carling. "I have observed it with some uneasiness too. Elsie is a charming creature—the tribute of your admiration proves it. But, what with his companies and his politics, Browning is a very busy man, and he is somewhat neglectful of her. But he is a good fellow, as you know, since you are his friend. And I believe Elsie to be very fond of him. Also, there is the boy. But still there was the neglect; and your assiduity made me uneasy, for, as you know, you have the masterful, conquering air—not at the present moment, perhaps." He paused and considered Halliburton's white face and strained posture with a smile of quiet appreciation. "Well, I made up my mind to satisfy myself whether I had real grounds for that uneasiness; and, if I had, to remove them—to remove them."

The last three words came in a tone of cold resolution, which rang very sinister in Halliburton's ears. He shivered. He strove not to feel that his host had pronounced sentence of death.

"You have satisfied me, Mr. Halliburton, that the grounds of my uneasiness were very real indeed," said Mr. Carling; and his voice had assumed a tone of severity, the tone of a judge summing up. "Your exposition of your methods of assault was masterly in its lucidity—the exposition of a man who knows his subject thoroughly. You have convinced me, too, that you are no mere theorist, but a past-master of the practice of your art; that your persistent appeal to a woman's weakness, her emotional craving for the more demonstrative, caressing form of affection, is, in nine cases out of ten, irresistible."

Halliburton ground his teeth. A dull fury at his self-revealing folly mingled with his fear.

"Therefore, I am going to remove you," said Mr. Carling.

He paused to gaze steadily into Halliburton's raging eyes, and held them. Halliburton knew well that his one chance was to spring on the old man and wrench the revolver from him. He knew that it was a good chance, that in the sudden flurry it was odds on the old man's missing him. He could not stir. It was not the revolver that held him, it was the personality behind it. His eyes fell dully to the glimmering barrel. He waited—quivering, tortured, clammy with cold sweat—for the spurt of flame and the crack.

"However, I do not propose to shoot you out of hand, unless you insist on it," said Mr. Carling, with a return to his suave, agreeable tones. "My intention is to put the matter to the arbitrament of what is called the American duel. I do not know why it is called the American duel, since the true American duel is fought with revolvers. Perhaps a Frenchman gave it the name. The procedure, as you are doubtless aware, is that either of the combatants swallows a pill. One of the pills contains poison; the other is innocuous. Here are the two pills."

As he opened the snuff-box with his left hand and turned the pills on to the table a gasping groan of relief burst from Halliburton. There was yet a chance of life.

"You lady-killers do not seem very brave outside your profession," said Mr. Carling, with gentle contempt. "This drug produces exactly the same symptoms as the toadstool, which kills those people who eat it under the impression that it is a mushroom. You will remember that we have eaten mushrooms this evening. One of us, therefore, will die of mushroom-poisoning—a quite natural death. Which of the pills will you have? I will give you the choice."

He rolled the two pills across the table.

Halliburton stared at the two little white balls with starting eyes, striving to detect some discoloration, some irregularity of shape which might show him which contained the drug. They danced before his eyes. By a violent effort of will he steadied his gaze. He could see no difference between them; their likeness was hideous to him. He picked up the farthest from him with fumbling, trembling fingers, and rolled the other back across the table.

"HALIBURTON STARED AT THE TWO LITTLE WHITE BALLS WITH STARTING EYES."

Mr. Carling picked it up with his left hand, put it in his mouth, and swallowed it. Halliburton tried to swallow his, but it stuck in his throat. His mouth was very dry. He snatched up a glass in which was left a mouthful of champagne, and drank it. The pill went down. It struck him that the champagne had very quickly gone flat.

"The die is cast," said Mr. Carling, with gentle cheerfulness.

The two men stared at one another.

Then, in the same gentle, precise voice, with the same meticulous choice of words, Mr. Carling said, "The action of the poison begins, about ten minutes after it is taken, with violent cramp—very painful, I believe. The spasms grow more and more violent, racking, as it were, the life out of the sufferer, who eventually dies of exhaustion. I was unable to choose a less painful method of removing you, though your mere removal was all I cared about, for I wished to produce the appearance of mushroom-poisoning."

"Shut up, you old devil! Can't you?" cried Halliburton, violently.

"I feared you would be unable to brace yourself to die like a gentleman," said Mr. Carling, with gentle contempt.

Halliburton sat with his eyes on the table-cloth, his hands clenched, the nails driven into the palms, all his being concentrated in an effort to perceive the first working of the poison. His senses seemed stimulated to an extraordinary, morbid acuteness of perception. The ticking of the clock was a burden. It hammered on his ears. Now and again he

raised his fearful eyes to its face, and then turned them on his adversary, in a feverish hope to see his lips twisting with pain.

Mr. Carling was watching him with quiet interest.

Five interminable minutes ticked themselves away with irritating clamour. Every tick jarred Halliburton's nerves.

Then Mr. Carling said, "Perhaps I may tell you now that both the pills contained exactly the same amount of the drug."

A slow, deep flush spread over Halliburton's face as he stared at him with unbelieving eyes. It faded, leaving his skin a dead, lustreless white.

"You fiend! You horrible old fiend!" he said, in a hushed, breathless voice.

"If you had called me vermin-killer, now!" said Mr. Carling, carelessly.

Halliburton fell back limp in his chair, and the tears welled to his eyes and rolled slowly down his cheeks. The feminine strain, the basic secret of his success with women, had its way with him. He looked no more at the clock; through misty eyes he saw the beautiful world, so full of pleasures, slipping away from him.

Mr. Carling laughed gently; and Halliburton wondered plaintively at his inhuman callousness.

"It must seem hard to a man who holds them so lightly to be carried off in his vigorous prime for the sake of a woman,' said Mr. Carling, with gentle sympathy.

"Curse women! Curse them!" said Halliburton, fervently, through his set teeth, and an access of petulant, womanish fury dried his tears.

Of a sudden the first spasm of cramp took him, and drew from him a long-drawn, whining moan of terror. Cramp succeeded cramp; he writhed in spasms of pain and fell from his chair to the floor. He rolled and writhed and squirmed, battling furiously against the spasms, but after a while he knew, as Mr. Carling had said, that they were racking the life out of him. He felt it ebbing. Then at last he felt that they were growing less violent, and knew that they had done their work.

He lay very still, exhausted. He could feel death creeping towards the strongholds of his body. Already his hands and feet were cold and numb. Snatches of his life came back to him in swiftly-moving pictures—childhood scenes, scenes from his boring schooldays, love-scenes, dinners, poker hands, more love-scenes, bridge hands, dances. He plunged into an unfathomable sorrow for himself.

Dimly, with dying eyes, he saw that Mr. Carling was standing over him. A sudden access of hatred of his murderer set the life in him flickering up. Then he was dully aware that Mr. Carling was kicking him in the ribs, and speaking in tones raised high to reach a dying man's intelligence.

"I think we've had enough of the farce," he was saying. "You're not really poisoned at all, Mr. Halliburton."

To Halliburton his words came faint from far away; they did not concern him.

Again Mr. Carling kicked him in the ribs, and said, "You're not poisoned at all, you ass!"

Halliburton's glazing eyes lost their glaze. Then Mr. Carling, stepping back to get a better length for a kick, trod on his hand; and Halliburton realized that his extremities might be cold, but they were not numb.

Mr. Carling delivered the kick, and cried, with his first display of impatience, "Are you going to lie here all night? You young fellows are so inconsiderate. I want to be getting to bed!"

Halliburton began to understand; his brain was grasping slowly the incredible fact of his safety. Very feebly he raised himself on his elbow, blinking at Mr. Carling.

Mr. Carling's voice sank to its wonted gentle tones and, smiling pleasantly, he said, "We have both had a dose—an equal dose—of phenol-phthalein. I had prepared myself against it by taking three soda-mint tabloids—a simple remedy. Therefore it did not cause me the discomfort it seemed to cause you. Your contortions amazed me."

Very painfully, very feebly, Halliburton got on to his feet, and stood holding on to the table. His eyes were still faintly incredulous. Then came the full shock of the revulsion from hopeless dread to an ecstasy of joyful relief. The tears came streaming from his eyes; and he cried like a woman, with loud, relieving sobs.

A faint compunction passed swiftly over Mr. Carling's face, leaving it wholly contemptuous. He wagged a finger at his weeping guest, and said, dryly, "Ah, you're a terrible fellow—a devil of a fellow, Mr. Halliburton! A sad dog—remarkably sad."

He paused, and surveyed the crumpled viveur with very scornful eyes. Then he added, "I think you're cured of your passion for my daughter, aren't you?"

Halliburton said nothing; he stared stupidly at him.

"Come, come, don't sulk!" said Mr. Carling, sharply. "Is that how you take a joke? *I* bear no malice. Are you cured, or aren't you?"

"MR. CARLING DELIVERED THE KICK, AND CRIED, WITH HIS FIRST DISPLAY OF IMPATIENCE, 'ARE YOU GOING TO LIE HERE ALL NIGHT?'"

"Con-found your daughter!" quavered Halliburton.

"I thought so—a perfect cure," said Mr. Carling, with a chuckle. "The Carling cure for misplaced affection. Begad, I must advertise it!"

He walked to the door, unlocked it, and threw it open.

"Well, good night, Mr. Halliburton," he said, putting his hands in his pockets. "Thank you for a very pleasant and—er—yes—instructive evening. But I think, if I were you, I should leave town. I never could keep a joke to myself—never."

Halliburton made for the door, tottering and swaying.

"At any rate, I shall tell Elsie the joke," said Mr. Carling. "Very likely she will be angry with me; as you have demonstrated with your incomparable lucidity, women are emotional creatures. None the less she will laugh—heartily. She has a sense of humour." He paused, and added, pensively, "I think she gets it from me."

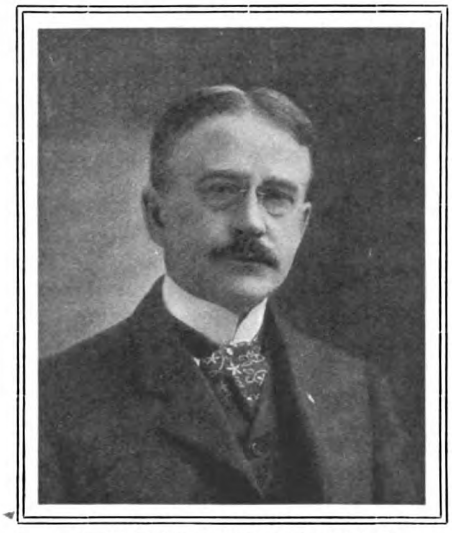
The Autobiography of a Self-made Man.

By TOM MURRAY.

[It very rarely happens that a successful man is able to explain exactly how he made his way. In the following article Mr. Tom Murray, who started life as a Canadian boy without a shilling, and who has built up one of the most flourishing business houses in Chicago, relates in plain and simple language the story of his career. It is a story of singular interest to every class of reader, while it cannot fail to prove of real and special value to every young man who is at the beginning of a business life.]

THIS is the story of starting a one hundred and twenty-five thousand pound retail business of a big city on eleven pounds, and making the jump in just ten years. If this is to be told in a way to be of practical use to clerks, merchants, and business men, I must begin at the beginning and get right down to bed-rock.

Necessity was the mother of merchandising in my case. We lived in a little Canadian town—mother and I—so small that it has been wiped off the map in later geographies. Perhaps it had five hundred inhabitants. We were desperately poor—how poor is told by the fact that one room served us as parlour, bedroom, kitchen, pantry, and shop—for mother did sewing, tailoring, and reblocking of hats to keep her little family going. Even a small boy could realize that such a struggle was hard lines for a woman.



MR. TOM MURRAY AT THE PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by Goover, Chicago.

That realization was what first stirred my latent trading instincts. It came to me that I could see a way to help mother out. So I nailed an old biscuit-box on a sled and went out into the country to the home of a farmer who had put down some fine winter apples. He sold me a bushel of them, and I hauled them back to town. Next day was election day, and I was out in the street ready for the first voter who made his appearance, and I stayed until the last had left at night. The day's transactions cleared me over three dollars, and it was the "biggest" day I have ever had. Of course, I realize now that a part of my success was due to the kindness of those who knew me as "the widow's boy," but at the time I thought it was because of the apples and the hustling that I put behind them.

I kept on in the apple trade, but one day, when I was about thirteen, the local shopkeeper stopped at my corner, put his hand on my head, and said:—

"Boy, you seem to be quite a merchant. How would you like to work in my shop?"

This from the merchant prince of my little world! There was only one answer, and I hotfooted it home to tell mother of the great opportunity that had suddenly opened up to her son. "He says he'll pay me five pounds a year for the first year and more the next," I told her.

"But you ought to stay in school; an education is very important," she urged.

"Yes; but I'll be learning something about the business that will help me," I argued.

And I did get important business lessons—although not quite in the way I expected. The main lesson was this.

After I had worked in the general shop about two months and had formed a closer acquaintance with figures than ever I did at school, I found a certain fascination in mathematical calculations. Of course, my mind ran on the munificent salary that I was receiving, and one day I took a sheet of brown paper and laboriously figured out how much a day I was getting. The result startled me. Fourpence! There it was in cold figures. I went over the calculation very patiently and verified it. Then I

thought of the days when I had cleared ten to fifteen shillings.

That night I took the sheet of wrapping paper home to mother, and we faced the figures together. Our ideas of the benevolence of that shopkeeper changed considerably in the light of those figures. It was plain that I could earn more by selling apples and still go to school.

Next morning I talked the situation over with the shopkeeper. He assured me that I was getting a fund of invaluable experience, and that if I would stay he would raise my pay to eight pounds a year. I stayed, and at the end of the year he raised me to twenty-four, then to thirty-two, and finally to forty pounds. In short, because I was "the widow's boy" and had no man to advise me, he talked me into working for him at the price he had paid his other assistants *in addition to their board.* I never engage a clerk, cashier, or helper of any sort without thinking of the way my first employer served me.

Occasionally a wayfarer brought news of the money to be made in the "States." This was food for the imagination of the shop-boy and his chum. Finally, we decided to go to Chicago and make our fortunes. We were about seventeen years old, and just as green as anything that ever grew in Canada. Mother made me a heavy overcoat of the ulster style, and when I put it on she said, "Tom, when you look for work be sure to wear that coat; it makes you look a lot more like a man." For three and ninepence I bought a new carpet-bag—I can see it now, a mixture of brown and green—and into this were packed all my possessions, save the money pinned inside my coat. That amounted to just sixteen and sixpence when I reached Chicago. My companion had a little more; but we were so afraid of being robbed that, on the train, one kept watch while the other slept.

Having worked in a shop I naturally looked for work in a Chicago shop—and found none! When my money was almost gone I proposed that we should go out to Rockford, Ill., as a young man had once gone out from our little Canadian place to that town, and, according to the local gossip, had prospered greatly. To save a lodging bill, we sat up in the station all night and took the early morning train out.

At Rockford I left my carpet-bag in the hotel at the station and started out to hunt for work. Several shopkeepers turned me away, but finally I came to one place where the proprietor gave me a hearing. At first he shook his head, but when I said, "I've come a long way, sir—all the way from Canada—and I've got to have a job," he remarked: "Canada, eh? The folks I've known from Canada have turned out first-rate. I'll give you a trial—at thirty-six shillings a week to start. When do you want to begin?"

"Now," I answered, slipping off the overcoat that mother had declared made me look like a man.

Rockford was a lively place, the shop was a good one, and the result was that I learned a lot about handling goods, earning money, and, I am sorry to say, about spending it too. The sensation of spending money for personal pleasures was a new one to me, and having no intimate friend older than myself to steady me, and being of a lively disposition, it was not wholly strange that I became foolish and frisky. However, I sent some money back home to mother—but not nearly so much as I should.

When Chicago began to rebuild, the year following the big fire, Rockford became a little small, and I began to think that Chicago was about the size for me. So I cut loose and applied for a job to the head of Marshall Field and Co.'s furnishing-goods department, in the retail trade.

But after I had been given a place at two pounds eight shillings a week, and turned loose in the department, it didn't take me five minutes to realize that I was hopelessly green at the business. So I went up to the shop-walker and said:—

"I'd like to have about a week in which to familiarize myself with the stock before being called to wait upon customers." Fortunately, he replied, "Very well," and I started in to "get next" to my job. And this was the way in which I did it. As one of the experienced salesmen would start to serve a customer, I would slip up near him and pretend to be busy looking up goods. My ears were open, and I took in every word the salesman and the customer said. In this way I went from one customer to another, and by the time the week was up I had a very fair knowledge of the stock and its selling points.

There I stayed for six years, and until I was receiving three pounds twelve shillings a week. One day I went out with one of the gayest young salesmen in the shop and attempted to keep up to his pace. As a result I received my first discharge. It gave me a considerable jolt and penitence, but not enough to teach me my lesson.

Two weeks later the man who had engaged me offered me the place back again, but I felt a little sensitive and looked for work elsewhere. The manager of a large retail shop finally hired me to take charge of his "gents' furnishing-goods" department. The display windows devoted to that department were in a positively dirty condition, and I helped clean up with my own hands. That made a hit with the management, and I took a keen and genuine interest in keeping everything in the department right up in shipshape. It was my department, and I felt it.

Finally I began to wake up to the fact that there was nothing in the retail business for the shop assistant. That is, of course, speaking by comparison. I could almost count on the fingers of my two hands the men working on a salary, in drapers' and upholsterers' shops, who received four hundred pounds a year. That spurred me to take a look into the wholesale field. Here was an astonishingly different state of affairs Salaries of one thousand pounds were frequent, and scores of men put the figure up to two thousand pounds.

ONE OF TOM MURRAY'S FAVOURITE ADVERTISEMENTS.

Just then I had an offer from a wholesale firm to take charge of its "furnishing-goods" stock. But when I notified my employer he said, "You know I am interested in a wholesale establishment myself. If you are determined to switch to the wholesale side of the business, I'll give you as good a chance there as you are offered with the other firm."

I accepted. The head of the wholesale house made me a proposition to go down to his department at a salary of two hundred and forty pounds per year. This munificent salary at twenty-seven emboldened me to marry. At the end of the year he advanced my salary to three hundred pounds per year, the next year to four hundred pounds per year, and the next to four hundred and eighty pounds per year. For the two years following that I worked for a salary of eight hundred pounds.

Then another firm sent for me and offered me a thousand pounds per year, and engaged me at that figure to come at the end of the year, or as soon as I could. When I informed the head of the house where I was going, he tried first to talk me out of it, and when he found he could not, he then said, "Well, Murray, since you are going at the end of the year, can't you just as well go now as not?" Which I did. I wanted that extra two hundred pounds.

The man who paid me a thousand pounds per year wanted to make it three years. I had by this time commenced to realize that my services were worth something. I believed that I had ability, so I told him that I did not care to make it more than one year, that he had the reputation of being a very hard man to work for, and that if I could not live and work in this place happily, why, I would not want to work for him at all; that he must let me alone during the year, and that, if I did not bring good results, he should tell me so at the end. I said to him—and it proved true—"You will pay me much more for the second and third years, when the time comes, than you will now." At the end of the first year he offered me twelve hundred pounds for the second year. At the end of the second year he offered me fifteen hundred pounds for the third year, and after that a guaranteed salary of eighteen hundred pounds per year and a percentage on the sales of the department, provided the profits should reach a certain amount. My bonus at the end of the year brought my yearly salary up to between two thousand two hundred and two thousand four hundred pounds.

During these years, from the time that I

was drawing a salary of four hundred and eighty pounds per year, my wife continually urged me to save something for a rainy day. I did so, but I made the mistake that so many men make, and I should like to warn all young men against it—that is, trying to make easy money. I had invested my savings in schemes such as mining stock, where I was going to get rich quickly. Some of these schemes looked good, and might have turned out all right had times remained prosperous, but, when the panic came, one after another they were swept away. In addition, I lost my position, owing to my firm being caught in the panic and retiring from business.

As I look back now I see what caused the downfall of that house, which prior to the panic was supposed to be one of the most solid in Chicago. The loan of but ten thousand pounds would have saved it from going into the hands of a receiver, but the loan could not be obtained, principally on account of the habits of the head of the house—a case of spending his time and money watching the tape; going to the telephone every few minutes of the day to know what the market was and to give instructions to brokers; going out at noon and coming back with his brains befuddled with too much drink.

The easy ways of the head of the house were, in most instances, duplicated by the men in its employ. They were nearly all, you might say, men of the world, in every sense of the word.

The example and influence of the head of the house irresistibly communicated themselves to all subordinates. Here was a house doing a business of about six hundred thousand pounds per year, that a loan of ten thousand pounds would have saved; but it would have saved it only temporarily, because there could be but one end to any firm where the head of the house set the example that was set in this case.

I can well remember many a time going out to the races along with the rest of the club members of Chicago and the men of the world, and I would stand side by side with my employer, both of us staking our money on the same races. Nice example! He usually backed favourites. He had more money than I had. I used to take the long odds that had a chance. I made more money than he did, but money made in that way did not do me any good. It never stays. For fear that I forget, I want to say now that there was a day when I would not have believed that the time would ever come when I would not go miles to see a horse-race. But when I went into business for myself I had common sense enough to know that as long as I had no money I had better have a good reputation. I did not want any of my creditors to know that I was a lover of horse-racing; and for the benefit of anyone who may read this who would like to discontinue taking interest in horse-races, I will tell you how I did it.

When I made up my mind to take no further interest in the races, I did not want even to be tempted as I looked at the entries. I stopped reading the sporting papers. I practically forgot that there were such things as horse-races, and for years, I am glad to say, I have been ignorant about races, and am proud of it. Some people might not think I am up-to-date, not being able to "talk horses," but I am willing to be out of it for the rest of my life.

I want to say that I am very temperate in my habits, and just to everybody. I would not leave my place of business to go out and take a social glass with the President of the United States. It is my rule never to indulge in even one drink under any circumstances during business hours. I may, in the evening, if out with a party of friends, my wife in the party, take two social glasses. Mark you, two. No more, under any circumstances.

When I go to a city banquet and the wine is passed freely, my wine-glasses are never emptied. I do not touch any of that wine, for the reason that I would not have the business men of Chicago see me gay at a banquet for anything in this world. My own head being clear, I can look around me and see this man and that man who occupy good positions a little under the influence of liquor, and I wonder how long they will keep those positions, because the drink habit is one that is very hard to control. I quitted it, which a good many think it impossible to do. I found that it was getting a little stronger than I was, and I am glad I found it out before it was too late.

Now, to go back to my story at the wholesale house that failed. I was out of my good job. I did not know what to do. I went down East to New York to try to find some lines of underwear and hosiery that I could sell on a commission basis. You would be surprised to note the difference in the way New Yorkers received me now, when I was down and out of a job, and in the days gone by, when I was a large buyer in their market. While I did not want to borrow any money

of them, they acted as if they had better not get too close to me for fear I might be able to reach out and touch them.

I succeeded in getting the account of half-a-dozen mills, came back to Chicago, and started out in my new line of business as a commission merchant. The second day I made eight pounds. I made up my mind then that I had struck the right business; but in the next twenty days I did not make one single sale. Not only did I not make any money, but I was out of pocket for the salary of the man who helped to carry my samples, his tramfares, and his lunches as well as my own. I carried a pack under my arm just the same as all the rest of the commercial travellers I met daily, men who had known me in former years, men who had known me as a success; and I did not give up. I stuck to it, and for a couple of weeks after this first twenty days of not making any money I had some good business. Later on, I can well remember twenty-seven days of hard work, showing my samples six to eight times a day, and not making one single sale. I have always had a fair amount of pride, and here is where that pride came to my assistance. I knew that others had made a good living in the commission business, and my pride would not allow me to give it up. I stuck to it and succeeded in building up a business large enough to live on comfortably. But prior to the panic I had been spending sixteen hundred to two thousand pounds a year for living expenses, and it was pretty hard work for me to clip the corners; and while I was making enough for my wife and me to live on very comfortably, I was not making as much as I was spending, and by 1897 I realized that I was practically broke, having ten pounds left. But, finally, when I got into my little shop, in business for myself, I found how hard it was to make money, and then got down to living within my means.

I walked the streets of Chicago in the busiest district looking for a shop to rent, and finally found a vacant one, about two hundred feet from the Board of Trade. I went home on Saturday night, and told my wife that there was a shop there that I believed I could make a living out of.

THE ENTRANCE TO TOM MURRAY'S HAT SHOP, CHICAGO.
From a Photograph.

I liked to consult my wife, for two reasons—one, that I had found in the past that she was pretty level-headed. The other reason was that, if I consulted her and made a mistake, she could not tell me afterwards, "I told you so." Most women-folk have far better business judgment than they are given credit for, and the majority of men, in my estimation, would be better off if they would consult their wives. Their bump of cautiousness is very large, and that is what most men need.

I went down on Monday morning after we decided that we would rent the shop. I went to the agent, leased it for three years at a rental of six hundred pounds per year, and signed the lease on October 20th, ten years ago. They gave me the shop rent free, rent to commence on December 1st. I paid ten pounds down to secure the lease, and that left me with just one pound in actual cash in

the world. I did have a little money coming in to me for goods I had sold on commission, but I could not get that until the goods had been delivered and paid for.

After getting the shop, of course I had to have fitments and a stock of goods. I went to two very large wholesale houses—one a furnishing-goods house and the other a shirt and collar house—both of which had known me for a great many years. I told them that I had rented a shop, and that I would like to have a stock of goods, although I had no money. Without any hesitation they both said, "Murray, you can have all the goods you want. You will win," and at the same time they gave me just a little advice—they knew that I had been what is known around town as a good fellow, and had spent money freely. I am not ashamed to say that I took the advice and profited by it.

After they had informed me that I could have the goods I sent for a fitments man. I was going to cater to high-class trade, and I must necessarily have nice fitments, so I made a contract for them, the expense to be two hundred and eighty pounds for a little "hole in the wall," as it was called in those days. I was to pay one-third down sixty days after the fixtures were finished, one-third in ninety days, and one-third in a hundred and twenty days.

In just ten days I opened for business, and succeeded in selling enough goods in the first hundred and twenty days to pay the rent, the assistant, and the man.

At the end of the year, when I took stock, I found, to my surprise, that I had lost five hundred and twenty pounds. I was then worth practically five hundred and twenty pounds less than nothing. During that year I did not let go of all my commission accounts, and had put the shop into the hands of a presumably competent man, but when I learned that I had lost five hundred and twenty pounds and I thought how it would look to see that name taken down from over the door, the name that I was so proud of, I decided that I would give up the commission business and go into the shop myself. And I tell you I put in some hard work; I worked for three years without ever going home to take dinner with my wife. I trimmed my window at night, so as to be able to wait on all the customers I could in the daytime. I knew that if only I could wait on a man once, he certainly would come several streets to trade with me again, and that proved to be the case. Even to this day I tell my salesmen to forget all about how they have been in the habit of selling goods in other places, to wait on customers my way—that is one of the great reasons for my present success.

When I learned that I had lost five hundred and twenty pounds, and I looked at my books and saw how much money I owed, I thought to myself, "Why, the sheriff will be here in a few days." My hair almost stood on end, and I thought to myself, "Why, the sheriff, when he has his sign out for a bankrupt sale, always does business, and I guess I will try it," so I had a large sign made, covering my one large window, which read, "Closed, but not by the sheriff." "But not" was in small letters. You could not read them from across the street, but they were there. I was telling the truth.

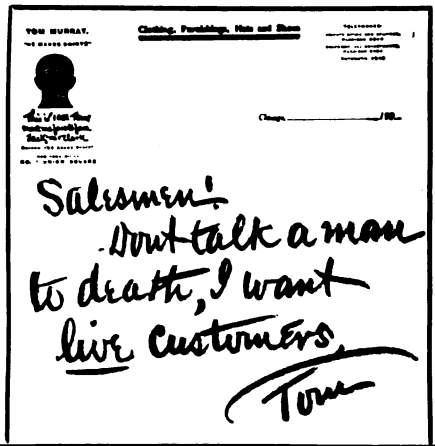
At the two side windows, at the door entrance, were signs reading, "There are moments when a man wishes to be alone. This shop will open to-morrow at nine." When we opened the shop at nine in the morning we had to let the crowd in in sections. After waiting on them we let them out at the back door. This sale lasted about three weeks. I gave them goods at cut prices, but I made a profit out of the three weeks' sale, paid every dollar I owed, and practically established my credit.

My business had been growing so fast that it forced me to the wall, but I went through the wall, took in another shop, and put a sign out over the door, "Forced to the wall, but going through it." About a year afterwards I was again forced to the wall, and I went through, too!—increasing my rent from nine hundred and sixty pounds per year to two thousand four hundred per year, but I did not do this without consulting my two friends in the wholesale trade. They seemed to be willing to take the chances; so was I.

One night during the year that my rent amounted to nine hundred and sixty pounds per year, after trimming one of my windows I had no price-ticket to put in it. The next morning I sent one of my boys over to a department store for a carpenter's blue lead-pencil, and I wrote on a sheet of letter-paper a few words regarding the goods in the window and the prices. The sheet of paper with the blue lead-pencil writing stopped the people. I wrote half-a-dozen more. It was new. So many people stopped that the side-walk was blocked to the kerb. I have been writing these blue pencil "ads" for my windows ever since. These short, crisp sayings on an ordinary sheet of letter-paper gave me my first big

boom in business. In fact, the boom was too large for my capital. The business grew faster than I was making money, which worried me a good deal. I was always owing so much. I well remember one day, when the head of the house from which I was buying shirts and collars sent for me.

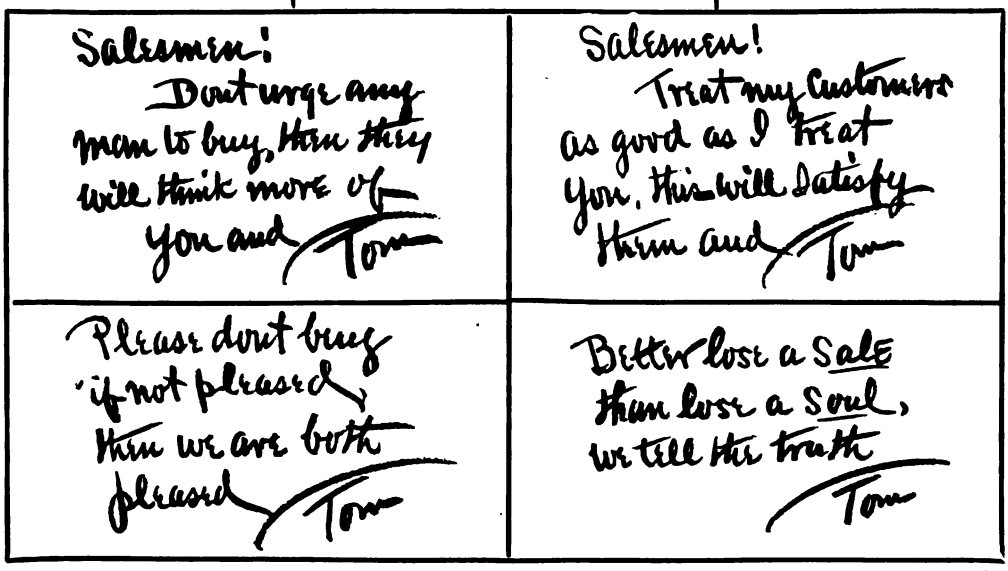
I knew what he wanted, so I went to the barber's shop first, and walked down to his office looking as prosperous as possible; I even bought one of the best cigars I could find on the way down. As I walked into his office he pulled out the slide at his desk, looked me over, and said, "Murray, it is not that smiling face I want to see; I want to see some money." My reply was, "That smiling face is my capital. If I came down to you dejected, with a long face, a look of worry and nervousness, you would lose confidence in me and my capital would be gone." I also informed him that I had no money for him.



After I'd spent about half an hour in his office, that man who already had so much confidence in me had still more, and before I paid him the three hundred pounds that was overdue I kept getting in more merchandise, until finally I owed his firm three thousand pounds. There were two other firms like this to whom I also owed about three thousand pounds.

I looked forward to the time when I might make a stock company of my business, knowing that I could do so by having the assistance of these firms. I found that to handle the business that I had built up I needed about another six thousand pounds, so I thought out a plan of capitalizing my business for sixteen thousand pounds. My equity was worth about four thousand pounds. I took two thousand pounds' worth of the stock for the goodwill of the business, and four thousand pounds for my equity, and went out to sell six thousand pounds of stock.

When I approached these three houses to whom I owed so much money and told them what I intended to do, they scratched their heads, and said, "Why, this is a new one. Tom, I guess you can do this. I do not know whether anyone else could do it or not." I asked them if they would take some of the stock; all three of them said "Yes." They seemed greatly pleased to buy it. It is no wonder. It did not surprise me at all.



PITHY SAYINGS LIKE THESE, WRITTEN WITH A BLUE PENCIL ON SHEETS OF PAPER, GAVE TOM MURRAY HIS FIRST "BOOM."

They were practically sleeping partners, and if I succeeded in selling this stock they would get their money. I asked them if I could refer to them. They said "Yes." That was all I needed. I had no trouble in selling the stock, and before the expiration of three years I bought it all back, but during those three years I had not paid dividends.

While I could have bought the stock back from them at par, I figured interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum for the three years I had had the use of their money, and I paid them interest on their money because I felt it was better to do it that way. This is the way that my mother taught me.

For a number of years I advertised only in my windows and in some of the tram-cars, because I did not feel that I could afford to advertise in the daily papers. Three years ago last September I was having a mackintosh coat sale, and I succeeded in selling for a couple of weeks about fifty mackintoshes a day. I thought I would try a column "ad." in an evening paper. The next day this column appeared in one of the evening papers, and, by the by, it was not the one which has the largest circulation in Chicago. I selected this paper because they gave me a low rate, but they agreed to give my "ad." a good position in the paper. The result was that the next day the sales, which formerly had been about fifty coats a day, jumped to one hundred and forty-two, and in fifty days I sold over three thousand five hundred rain-coats.

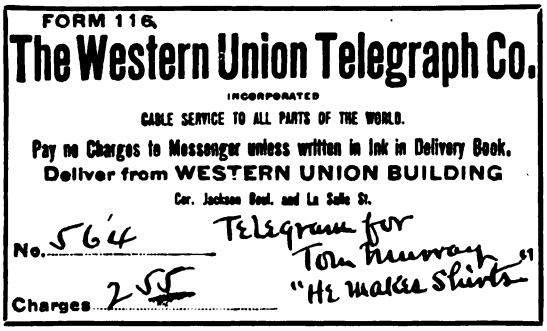
For the year following that sale I continued to advertise in this one paper. Two years ago I felt that I could afford to invest, say, about one thousand pounds in advertising in some of the other papers. I used three morning papers and three evening papers, the best in Chicago. The results have been something phenomenal. I did not have to invest the thousand pounds. The profits came back from the newspaper advertising before the bills came in, and I do not figure to-day that I have a dollar invested in advertising. In my opinion, the only way to advertise is to give them plain, common-sense talk. Tell them the truth. Do not get a customer to come to your store and find that you have faked him, for that is poor advertising, besides being dishonesty.

From a A ROOM IN TOM MURRAY'S OUTFITTING DEPARTMENT. [*Photograph.*

Most of the advertisers nowadays seem to think that they must hunt the dictionary through for all the large words they can find. I read an article a short time ago in a Chicago paper that stated that the advertising man of nowadays and in the future must be, of necessity, a college graduate. I

wanted to reply to it, and I would have done so, only the newspaper would have thought I was trying to advertise myself. I do not believe that a college graduate is as well fitted to be an advertising man as the man who knows only how to write good, plain common sense. I left school when I was thirteen years of age, and it is just as easy for me to sit down and write an advertisement as it is to smoke a cigar, because it is so easy to tell the truth in plain words.

Sometimes a man can think out a good advertisement to spring on the public. I had a few years ago what has been called ever since my "race-track" advertisement. I will explain to you what it was. I engaged twenty-five telegraph boys the morning of Derby Day, when something like fifty thousand of Chicago's best people turned out to see the Derby Day races. These boys left the Central Telegraph Office eight minutes apart, with a telegram addressed on the outside, "Telegram for Tom Murray; he makes shirts." The boys did their work faithfully. They were instructed to go through every train; after going through one to jump off at the first platform and get on the next train, and call at the top of their voices, "Telegram for Tom Murray; he makes shirts." Down into the race-track, into the betting-ring, over to the club-house, up in the grand-stand, everywhere you could hear those boys calling loudly, "Telegram for Tom Murray; he makes shirts."


FORM 116.

The Western Union Telegraph Co.

INCORPORATED

CABLE SERVICE TO ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.

Pay no Charges to Messenger unless written in Ink in Delivery Book.
Deliver from WESTERN UNION BUILDING
Cor. Jackson Boul. and La Salle St.

No. 564 Telegram for Tom Murray "He makes Shirts"

Charges 2 55

ANOTHER INGENIOUS ADVERTISEMENT—A REDUCED FACSIMILE OF THE TELEGRAM WHICH WAS DELIVERED ON THE RACE-COURSE.

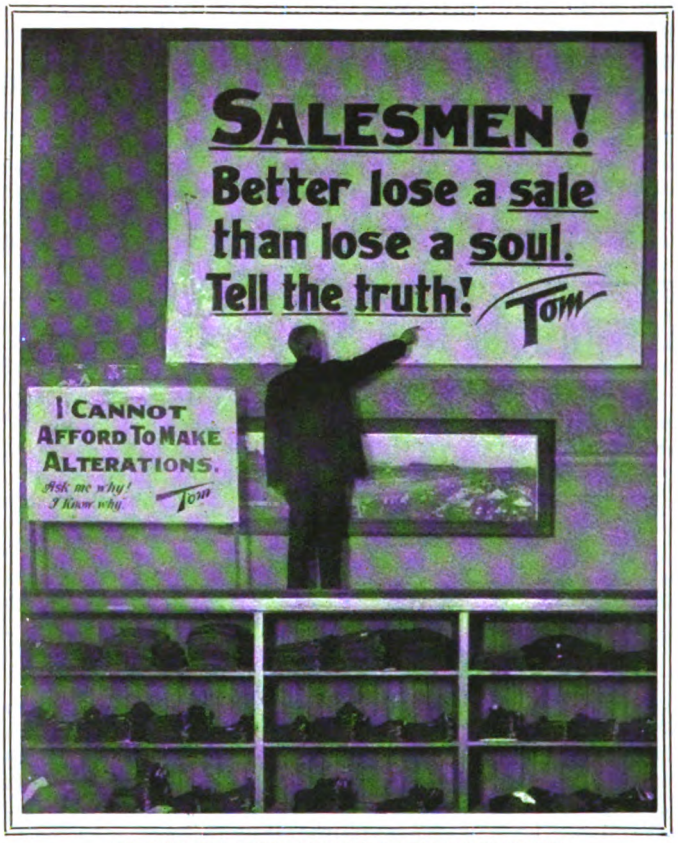
The advertisement cost me just sixteen pounds, and the public is talking about it yet. It brought me a goodly amount of trade. The sporting element, or the men who had sporting blood in their veins, because they were at the race-track that day, thought it was a good one, and showed their appreciation.

I had another a short time ago that created a good deal of talk and brought good results. On the corner of two streets here in Chicago they had torn down a building, and it left a wall-space about sixty by ninety feet. One of the largest sign-advertising men called on me and offered me this space, asking the enormous price of three hundred pounds for the use of it for ninety days. I leased it, with the privilege of subletting it. They painted my sign on it, and I thought to myself, "What can I do to that sign to make people look at it?" On the sign they had painted the name "Tom Murray." I had the "y" painted out and hired a woman to finish painting that sign. The lady whom I had engaged for this work never had been on a scaffold before. She had to stand about one hundred feet in the air and apparently finish that "y." Being dressed in white, with a bright scarlet hat and high-heeled shoes, she attracted a great deal of attention, so much so that the Chicago papers wrote it up on their first pages the next day, Sunday.

Monday, when she went up the scaffolding at twelve o'clock, for about three hours the streets were blocked; tram-cars could not run; impossible for anyone to even walk through the crowd. Business was practically suspended on the street for two blocks, north and south. I anticipated that the police would place her under arrest. She *was* under arrest, but she was over them. They could not get her down. She had instructions not to come down for anyone. My man, who was guarding the ropes below the scaffolding, warned the officers not to attempt to let down the scaffolding, as it might endanger her life, and they would be responsible.

He left his post to come and notify me, so that he could go and have his lunch. I rushed over to take his place. In the meantime the police had intimidated one of the sign-painters, a man—they could not intimidate the woman; they forced him to go up and bring the woman down. They took her away in the Black Maria.

I went over and asked the lieutenant what she was charged with. He read the law to me. I turned to her and asked her if she wanted to make a test case—whether a woman could earn an honest living painting signs or not? She said she did. They booked her as being an attraction drawing such crowds that it blocked traffic, which is



TOM MURRAY SHOWING ONE OF HIS CELEBRATED POSTERS.
From a Photograph.

against one of the ordinances of the city of Chicago.

I went bail for her appearance next morning in the police-court, put her in a cab, and sent her to her hotel. Next morning, with my lawyer and the lady sign-painter, we appeared at the police-station. The judge said: "Murray, you know the law. This is one of those advertisements of yours. She is not painting signs. We will suspend this case a week and see whether she paints any more signs or not."

This advertisement I hear from pretty nearly every day, and I expect to hear from it for years to come. It is what I call novel advertising.

As a rule, there is not a man in my employ who indulges too freely, who drinks too much, but I nearly always have two or three poor unfortunates with me that I am trying to make men of, and I have succeeded remarkably well. Some of my best men to-day are men whom I have been the means of reforming. I find it much easier to reform a man who is addicted to drink than it is to reform one who is addicted to gambling.

I have in my store a number of men past forty-five. Some of them are merchants who have made a failure in business, yet they make splendid employés. I would rather hire a man past forty-five that has had experience — and he will have experience at that time of life—than hire a young man who does not appreciate his position. His mind is on Saturday night, pay night, and watching the clock. The forty-five-year-old—yes, the fifty-five-year-old and the sixty—appreciates his position; appreciates being used like a man, being treated with respect, for I treat all my assistants with respect. These men of forty-five years of age rarely leave me, and I have never yet had occasion to discharge but one of my seniors, and that was one poor unfortunate that I simply could not reform.

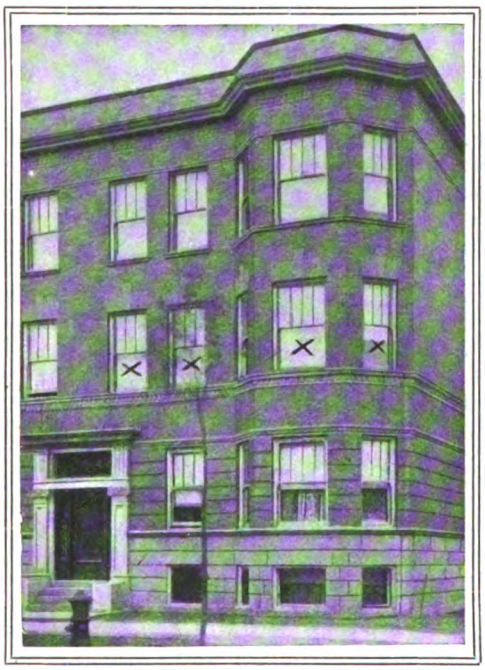
Of course, in my employ I have a number of young men. I never allow them to wait on customers until they are at least twenty-one years of age. I believe in engaging good help and paying good salaries. I believe my average pay-roll, per salesman, is higher than that of any house in the same line of business in the city of Chicago. I could engage any number of salesmen at two pounds a week, but I won't. I often have them offer to commence work at two pounds per week. If I want a man I tell him, "No, I do not want you to work for two pounds per week. I will start you on three pounds," because I want him to have enough to live on, so that he will not be tempted to take what does not belong to him, because he might imagine that he was worth more money than two pounds per week.

In my shop I have a number of young women working for me in the capacities of cashiers and clerks. I suppose I could employ thousands of these young women at a pound or twenty-five shillings a week, instead of two pounds, qualified to do the

work and do it well—probably just as well as the young women I now have in my employ. I never pay these young women less than two pounds per week. If I hired them at one pound or twenty-five shillings they would then be up against the struggle of their lives to look and be respectable.

Every shop that I know of in America obliges its assistants to stand on their feet from morning until closing time. Behind each counter in my shop is a chair. I want my employés when not busy to sit down and rest. As I walk through the different departments in my shop my employés do not have to feel that they must brace up because the "boss" is coming round. My assistants are doing right all the time, because they know that I am doing right and using them as near right as I know how. My employés would far rather have me at home than abroad. I guess that I am an easier fellow to work for than the manager, and he cannot be very severe on them because I always tell him to use them just as well as I use him. I tell every man at the head of a department, "Be kind to the assistants under you. Do not speak to them in any other way than the way in which I speak to you. Handle your assistants so that they will respect you, and so that they will regret to leave my employ."

There are no jealousies in my store among the employés. When they go home at night it is "Good night, Billy," "Good night, Johnny," good fellowship all round.



TOM MURRAY'S FLAT IN CHICAGO.
From a Photograph.

If a salesman does not make a sale, I never allow a customer to be turned over to a second salesman. If a salesman misses a sale, he is never called down because he missed that sale. I do not know who the men are in my shop who sell the most goods; I don't want to know. What I do want to know is that they are civil to customers, that they do not try to force a sale. All I ask them is to be gentlemanly, show plenty of goods, and if a customer does not buy, not to show any disappointment at not making a sale; and if a customer should bring back any goods to be exchanged, take just as much trouble with the exchange customer as when making a sale. If a customer brings back any merchandise and wants the money back, refund it cheerfully; do not try to sell the customer anything else. In other words, do as I advertise—to refund money and not look cross.

Not only do I every few weeks call my men together and talk to them as to how they are to wait on our customers, but I also talk with the men in my employ who are buyers. I try to make them realize that the traveller is a man before all that they must look out for; to use him almost with suspicion, but not to let him know it. Treat him civilly. Always be gentlemanly towards any man who solicits your trade to sell his goods, but do not let him buy a dinner for you, a cigar, or make you a present of any kind. In other words, no entertainment whatever. You then do not place yourselves under any obligations to him. Many a young man has been ruined by clever salesmen from these large wholesale houses; ruined in his habits and ruined as to his honesty.

I am sorry to say that there are many houses engaged in the mercantile business in America who are only too glad to bribe a man by handing him entertainment or even handing him money; one is just as bad as the other, and I know that I have not a man in my employ who will accept even a dinner from any man who sells goods, but they must treat them with civility, the same as I do.

Up on my wall above my desk is painted a sign: "It matters not what your business is, I have time to listen"; and that is the motto I want all my assistants to live up to.

STORIES STRANGE AND TRUE.

III.—The Haunted Palace: A True Indian Story.

By EDITH C. GERRARD.

Author of "Life's Seasons," etc., etc.

THERE are two classes of readers — those who prefer what is true, and those whose preference is given to fiction. When truth appears stranger than fiction, both classes are equally interested.

I can vouch for the absolute veracity of the persons whose experiences I relate, without any embellishment, in the following narrative. During many years' residence in the East, and travel in nearly all parts of the Indian Empire, I have witnessed many strange scenes, and have had experiences of my own and others that have quite surpassed the flights of fancy.

THE AUTHORESS, MRS. E. C. GERRARD.
From a Photograph.

One camping season I was travelling with my husband (a Government official) in the district of Rewari, in Upper India, and had arrived at Hissar, where we were exchanging hospitality with the European residents.

Christmas Day arrived, and we were invited to dinner by a particularly nice couple — a Colonel and Mrs. Robinson. He was an officer holding a staff appointment in Hissar, a kind, genial man, greatly liked and deservedly popular; his wife a sweet, gentle woman, a general favourite. Liking them both very much, we looked forward with pleasure to spending the evening with them. We were quite a small party, consisting only of Colonel and Mrs. Robinson, their grown-up son, their only other child, a dear little, delicate-looking boy of seven years old, the Civil Surgeon of the station, and ourselves.

The residence of the Robinsons was a huge, gloomy-looking structure, as seen from outside; a long, rambling building with an upper storey, a basement and "tykhanas" (or dungeons) underground. It had formerly been the palace of the Rajahs of Hissar, but the last ruler, having been a wicked and infamous man, was removed from the seat of government and his territory confiscated.

The Robinsons lived in apartments in the upper storey of the palace, and I remarked it as peculiar that, instead of entering the building in the usual way, through the doors on the basement, these were all closed and barred, and we ascended to the upper storey by an iron staircase or ladder attached to the outside wall, and entered immediately into a very large, long, and lofty hall, running for a considerable distance along the front of the building. This hall or room contained many high windows. Through a door at one side of the room we entered another of precisely the same size and shape, running parallel with the one we had just passed through; this second room was used by the Robinsons as a dining-room, and was lighted by windows at the far end. At the back of this room was another, of exactly the same dimensions, entered by a similar door at the side of the dining-room; this third room was the drawing-room. At the far end of this drawing-room, towards the centre of the building, was a door leading into the bedroom, and beyond that again another door led out of the bedroom into a bathroom.

It must be distinctly understood there were four very large, double cube-shaped rooms, one immediately behind the other, all running parallel.

My host took me in to dinner. Towards the end of dinner some remark had been made about the excellence of the food, and I said :—

"What a first-rate cook you must have! How lucky you are to possess such a clever servant!"

"Yes," replied Colonel Robinson, "he's a splendid man, but he is leaving us, more's the pity."

"I would never let him go," I answered. "He must be a treasure of a cook."

"He won't stay; I only wish he would. We've done all we could to persuade him."

"Oh, raise his wages," I said, "double his pay. Won't that be inducement enough?"

"We have done that already, long ago, but still he will insist upon leaving at the end of the month. None of our servants will stay with us, and we have to get new men from a distance, even from as far off as Agra and Amballa."

"Can't you get servants in the district? Why do you send so far away for them?" I inquired.

He replied, "Not a soul for miles round would come and take service here. When first we came we were told as much."

"How strange! Why, I should think they would be delighted to come to you and Mrs. Robinson. You must be such a kind master and mistress."

He laughed as he said, "Oh! that's not the reason we can't keep them; they like *us* well enough, but it's the *place* they don't like. This house is haunted, you know, and not a man-jack of them will stay in it. Your men who have come with you this evening will be told all about it, and I venture to say they wouldn't remain here the night through if you asked them to."

"How very ridiculous! How silly they are to believe in such nonsense!"

"Oh, no, it's not nonsense; the place *is* haunted right enough!"

"I, for one, don't believe in haunted houses," I remarked, in my youthful inexperience. I felt somewhat piqued, as I thought he was poking fun at me. I looked across the table at Mrs. Robinson and said, in a raised voice :—

"I think Colonel Robinson must imagine I am a very stupid person; he is trying to make me believe such nonsense—that this place is haunted and servants won't remain here."

I had hardly made this inopportune remark when Mrs. Robinson, with a very uncomfortable look on her face and a quick side-glance at her little boy, said, in a subdued voice: "Oh, yes, it's all true. By and by I'll tell you all about it—not now."

I instantly perceived she did not want her child to hear any remarks on the subject; of course, the native servants, not understanding English, were unconsidered.

Seeing my mistake, I turned to Colonel Robinson and apologized for my unbelief. At the conclusion of dinner, as I passed out of the dining-room into the drawing-room with Mrs. Robinson, I told her I quite thought her husband was making fun of me, and I only appealed to her in order to stop the conversation.

Then she said, "If it would interest you, I will tell you all there is to know—full particulars about everything—whilst we are alone."

I assured her I should be very glad if she would do so.

We seated ourselves before a blazing wood fire which was burning in a large, open fireplace surmounted by a long, wide mantelpiece which was edged with a very handsome peacock-feather valance or border.

As nearly as I can, I shall describe the strange narrative in her own graphic words.

It is fifteen years ago (she said) since my husband was ordered to this place. We were very glad to come, because the climate is good here and the appointment a permanent one; but when we arrived in Hissar we found, to our dismay, there was no arrangement about quarters for us. After thorough investigation we hit upon the idea of using a portion of the closed-up old palace, which was as strongly built as a fortress and in as good repair as one could desire—it only wanted cleaning up and generally ventilating, and our dwelling-rooms would be sumptuous.

My husband gave the necessary orders, we selected the rooms we wished to inhabit, but—and here came the hitch—though we had no difficulty in taking possession or going into residence, we were told that if we lived in the palace we should certainly never have a servant to wait on us there, as the place was haunted and had a very bad name. Such wicked things had been done in it that the natives of the place were frightened of it. We thought all this very foolish, and that probably, for some reason unknown, the people wanted to keep us out of it; but we determined to take no notice of what was said, beyond assuring the natives we had no fear of any kind, and forthwith domiciled ourselves in the palace.

Truth was uppermost, so far as our not being able to procure servants was concerned. Not a single man, woman, or child would come to us in that place, and even the few old servants we had brought with us left shortly after our arrival, making the usual lame excuse for going.

We determined to get a fresh staff of servants from a distance, and by giving them extra good pay make them contented to remain with us in spite of any local opposition. We settled ourselves very comfortably, and, as nothing out of the way happened to disturb our equanimity, we soon forgot all the silly talk we had heard on our first arrival, or, rather, what we imagined was foolishness, until we were suddenly and unpleasantly brought to another way of thinking.

One night we had gone to bed as usual, when, just as I was falling asleep, I heard my husband, as I supposed, fumbling about with my bunch of keys, trying to unlock the wardrobe. I always adopted the Indian habit of placing my keys and watch under my pillow. I had not noticed my husband getting out of bed nor his withdrawal of the keys, but thinking I must have dozed off, and wondering what he was doing at the wardrobe, I said:—

"George, what's the matter! What do you want out of the wardrobe at this time of night?"

There was a dim light in the room; as you know, one always keeps a little light burning at night in this country. I did not turn round to see what he was doing at the far end of the room where the wardrobe stood, for I was very sleepy, but as I received no reply to my question and the keys continued to rattle, I looked over my shoulder, and to my surprise, instead of seeing my husband opening the wardrobe, as I supposed, met his wide-open eyes staring in my face close by my side in bed. He had momentarily fallen asleep, and either I had wakened him with my voice or the rattle, which still continued, had disturbed him, as it had me. He said he thought I was responsible for the noise; that I had been rattling my big bunch of housekeeping keys, and wondered what I was doing. When seeking for an explanation, we each assured the other we had not touched the keys, and to prove we were neither of us making a mistake I drew them forthwith from under my pillow. This was extraordinary! We sat up in bed and stared at each other, very wide awake.

The sound continued, louder and louder; not like the rattle of a bunch of keys, but rather the shaking of chains in the far distance. It was not we alone who were disturbed by the unaccountable noise, for two fine hounds, very great favourites of ours, that always slept in one corner of our bedroom, were roused by it. They both stood up, stretched themselves, and gave a deep growl.

The extraordinary sound came nearer and nearer and still louder. It seemed to us like the rattle of heavy chains being dragged along stone passages and the dull, hard thud of elephants' feet. Thud! thud! thud! it came. Tramp! tramp! tramp! Rattle! rattle! rattle! The sound was absolutely incomprehensible and alarming, as it came nearer and nearer, louder and clearer.

"What an extraordinary thing!" my husband said. "What can it be? Somebody must be up to tricks of some sort. I must find out what this means."

He sprang out of bed, turned up the lamp, took the bunch of keys in his hand, unlocked the wardrobe and lifted from it a loaded five-chambered revolver, slipped on his camel-hair dressing-gown, went into the bathroom, fetched out a hurricane lantern that used to burn there at night, and, turning to me, said:—

"You stay here, dear"—for he saw me hastily putting on my dressing-gown. I told him I very much preferred going with him, as I thought, choosing between two evils, it would be the lesser one. I very much objected to being left alone in that lonely room, listening to the gruesome and inexplicable noise. I must confess I was very frightened.

The sound came nearer and louder as we spoke, seeming to drown our voices. My husband strongly objected to my accompanying him, and said it would be much better for me to remain in the room until he returned, as I might get a shock if I went out, especially if firearms had to be used. So, in compliance with his wish, I remained behind, sitting on the side of the bed. I was shivering and shaking in absolute terror.

My husband opened the door, took the hurricane lamp in one hand, his revolver in the other, and called to the hounds to come with him, but they required no calling. As soon as the door was opened they had rushed past him with deep, angry growls, and had gone on ahead. Then my husband left me.

I suppose he had not been gone for more than a few minutes, though to me it seemed

"THEY RUSHED PAST HIM WITH DEEP, ANGRY GROWLS."

a long time, when all of a sudden the sounds completely ceased; not dying away by degrees, but at once, in a moment. They had commenced, as it were, in the far distance; then, when the noise seemed to be so loud it might have been close by, it absolutely stopped, and there was dead silence. This sudden silence seemed as strange as the uncanny sounds.

Almost immediately when the sounds had ceased a strange thing happened. The two noble hounds that had rushed out so bravely and fearlessly in front of my husband returned, looking the most abject sights I had ever beheld. They were crouching on the ground, dragging themselves along almost on their stomachs, their tails between their legs, their bodies quivering with fear, and making moaning sounds. I spoke to them and called them by name, but they took not the slightest notice of me. I went up to them and tried to touch them, to comfort them, but they shrank past me and crawled under the bed beyond my reach, and there they lay moaning and trembling. My heart ached for them; I knew they had had some terrible shock, and, as my belief is the same as many others—that dogs possess a kind of second-sight—my fear was not lessened, though they occupied my thoughts till my husband came back into the room.

"Well," I said, "what is it? What is the matter? What have you seen? Just look at those poor hounds—what a terror they are in! They have certainly seen something."

"Well, I have not," he said. "I cannot understand what all this means. As I went through one room into the other the sounds seemed to come nearer and nearer, as if they were meeting me; then, when I got to the far room of all, where the cause of the noise, whatever it was, seemed to be, the sounds ceased in an instant. Before I got half-way there I met the hounds coming back in the state you saw them now. What has happened to them and what they've seen I don't know; but I mean to get to the bottom of it if I can."

"What are you going to do?" I said.

"Well," he replied, "I'll put on my clothes and call the servants in from the compound and search every part of this building, down to the very dungeons. Whatever it is, I'll unearth it."

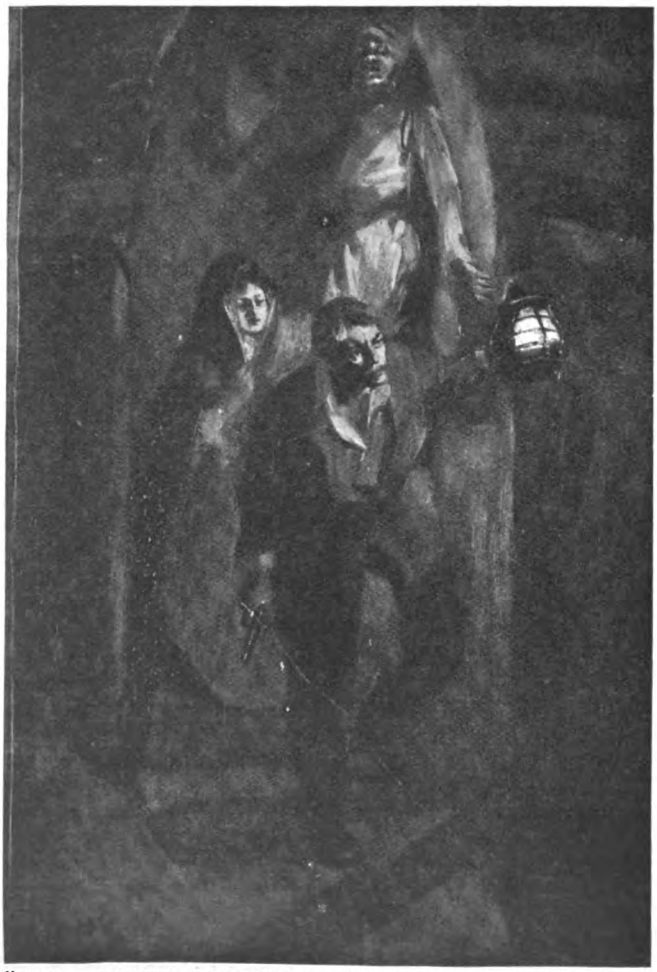
"Very well," I said, "I'll dress, too, and go with you."

My husband hastily put on his things and, going to the butler's quarters in the compound, told him to rouse the servants to come and make a thorough search of the whole place. It took us a long time to go

over that entire building, and in the cold winter night, for it was just Christmas-time, as it is now, it was anything but pleasant to be roaming through those many vacant rooms and dank and noisome dungeons. Well, we discovered nothing, no trace whatever of anything, not even men's footprints in the accumulated dust of the lower rooms, and certainly no footprint of an elephant. We traversed long stone corridors, endless passages, and stately halls, with the remains of past splendour clinging to them, but nothing did we see to account for our recent experiences or bring our search to a satisfactory termination. We were absolutely as much mystified at the end of it as we were at the beginning, and we eventually went back to bed, thoroughly tired out and foiled, and at last we fell asleep.

Now I must tell you a strange and sad thing that happened. When we woke in the morning our beautiful, noble hounds were lying cold and stark under our bed, quite dead! We could hardly credit it when we saw them, but it was too true. We had done what we could to cheer and comfort them before sleeping, yet they continued to shiver and shake violently, and we could not induce them to come out from under the bed, so we thought it best to leave them alone, trusting they would eventually become calm, would sleep, and be all right by the morning. Had we realized that theirs would be the sleep of death, I am sure there would have been no sleep for either of us that night.

The next day there was a commotion. Most of our servants told us their mothers had "gone sick," and they must go to their "ghur log." The inevitable had come; our frightened servants departed, and the constant changing of domestics commenced.



"WE TRAVERSED LONG STONE CORRIDORS, ENDLESS PASSAGES, AND STATELY HALLS."

"What an extraordinary account!" I said. "Did you ever hear the strange noises again?"

"Yes, often," she replied, "and always in precisely the same manner, commencing as from a distance, then coming nearer and louder, until quite suddenly they cease entirely. We have always noticed they come on particular days, festivals, holidays—either English or native."

I asked my hostess whether there was any possible solution of the mystery.

"Well," she said, "you know we try to put two and two together. There is no doubt that horrible deeds were done in the palace. There was a terrible mutiny and massacre in Hissar, and the Rajah of the place was a wicked, cruel man; not only was he treacherous to our people, but he was inhuman to his own. It was an authentic fact that he kept elephants trained to destroy people. If any of his unfortunate wives in his harem displeased him, they used to be thrown into the underground

dungeons of this palace; elephants, trained as executioners, were led in to them, and would either trample the women to death or twist their poor victims up in their trunks, wave them round in the air, and dash them against the walls or on the stone floor of the dungeons. Oh! I have heard that the atrocities which took place were terrible.

fastened, and they were literally hacked to pieces, not a soul amongst them being left alive.

"When our brave soldiers arrived, too late to save them, a ghastly sight met their gaze. They found the room ankle-deep in blood, gory bodies lying one on the top of another in a mass, battered brains and clotted hair sticking to the sides of the walls, and the

"ELEPHANTS, TRAINED AS EXECUTIONERS, WERE LED IN TO THEM."

"In the Mutiny days many lives were lost here. This used to be a military station of minor importance An officer holding the same appointment as my husband does now was playing chess with another official, when a servant rushed into their presence and told them a number of 'sowars' had arrived from Delhi. The native troops and inhabitants rose at once. Some of the Europeans fled, and Mr. Taylor, the official in charge, though severely wounded, eventually escaped; but seven unfortunate European men and seven women, with fifteen poor little children and two Eurasian women, perished miserably.

"They sent to the Rajah and prayed that he would protect them. This he promised to do if they would proceed at once to the palace. The terrified people put their trust in him and fled to this palace; but as soon as they arrived they were all collected in the room I use as my bathroom now. Native soldiers rushed in to them, the door was door hacked with sabre-cuts, the marks of which are there to this day. You can see them on the door now.

"To crown the fiendish brutality that had been wreaked on those betrayed fugitives, sixteen bodies were headless, and when our soldiers entered this room in which we are now sitting, on this very mantelpiece they saw sixteen blood-bedaubed heads, all placed upright, in a row, from one end of it to the other.

"It is on record that those infuriated English soldiers rushed back into that room of carnage, and, with fierce oaths upon their lips, dipped their swords into the gory mass and swore before Heaven they would kill the natives as long as they could hold their swords in their hands. Is it to be wondered at, in a building where such terrible deeds have been done, strange phenomena should take place?"

As Mrs. Robinson said these words my eyes were fixed on the mantelpiece, and horror was in my heart.

Art Favourites at Home and Abroad.

THE shyness of the deer has passed into a proverb, and it was with much daring of idea, therefore, that the late Mr. S. E. Waller painted "Uninvited Guests." But this artist knew these graceful creatures as few men can know them. In patiently sketching their picturesque capers and delightful poses Mr. Waller often experienced their shyness to the vexation of his artistic purpose; but, on the other hand, he learned to know also how, with an untiring and tactful cultivation of their friendship, this shyness can be overcome and their confidence gained, as it has evidently been gained by the young lady in his picture. The two deer, with a fawn, have apparently followed her from the park into the hall of one of those old ancestral mansions that Mr. Waller delighted to paint, whilst a fourth is fearlessly entering at the door. Most of Mr. Waller's subjects, which engraving has made so familiar to us, are of the eighteenth century, but the costume of the young lady, whose grace of figure rivals that of her uninvited guests, shows that this picture is of the date —1878—at which it was painted. The artist was then a young man of twenty-eight, and its purchase from the walls of the Royal Academy did credit to the discerning taste of its present owner, Mr. W. Y. Baker, who probably foresaw the reputation which Mr. Waller achieved with such works as "The Day of Reckoning" and "The Runaway Match" before his comparatively early death two or three years ago.

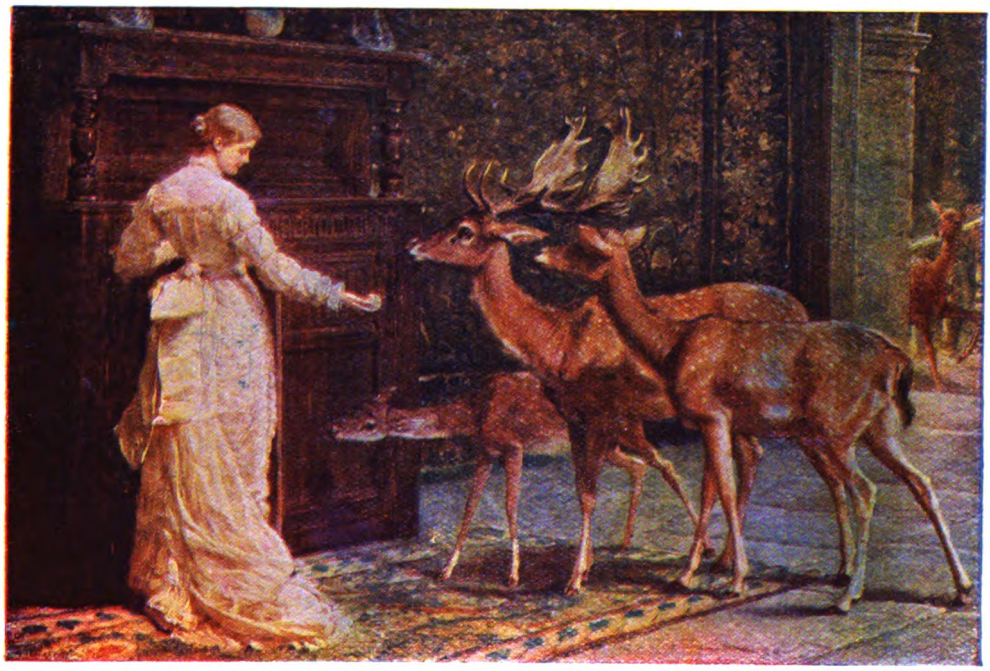
"Charity," which bears the date 1870, was one of the earliest works of Mr. Briton Rivière, R.A., the famous animal painter. The picture illustrates a theme—the pathos of animal in association with that of human life—with which Mr. Rivière's art has more than once made powerful appeal to our sympathies. A ragged outcast, seated on the doorstep of a church, is sharing her last crust with two starving dogs such as were commonly seen in the streets of London thirty years ago. The black lurcher is licking the crumbs off the girl's hand, his eyes eloquent with gratitude, whilst the white fox-terrier has his paws on her knee, eagerly awaiting his mouthful. There is snow on the ground, suggestive of Christmas-time; and on the wall of the church, in significant comment on the scene, will be perceived the notice of a sermon in aid of some charity.

The picture was painted under some difficulties, Mr. Rivière recalls, owing to his living in the country—in a rural part of Kent, we believe—at the time. In a land of such plenty for the canine species it was almost impossible to find two dogs lean enough to pose for the picture, and the beggar-girl had to be painted from the robust little daughter of a yeoman farmer. In London, to which the artist shortly afterwards removed, there would have been little trouble, unfortunately, in finding models for all three figures that could have been reproduced from the life. In working at "Charity" Mr. Rivière, who was then about thirty, had the advantage of encouragement and advice from Millais and Pettie, two artists in the heyday of brilliant careers to whom he was a promising beginner. The picture was duly accepted for the Academy, where it was purchased by Sir Coutts Lindsay, from whose hands it passed into those of Lord and Lady Wantage, and now hangs in the gallery at Lockinge, Wantage, Berkshire.

It is not too much to say, as M. Renan said when he first beheld Heinrich Hofmann's "Gethsemane," "This is by far the finest realization of the poetical concept of Jesus I have ever seen, or perhaps ever will be wrought

by the hand of man. I greatly admired M. Munkacsy's 'Christ Before Pilate,' but in strength and vividness that picture is not comparable to this, or in the appeal it makes to the sympathies." Similar encomiums have been expressed by many of the leading men on the Continent, and it is known that "Gethsemane" is one of the favourite pictures of the German Emperor, who has two copies of it framed in the Royal palaces. Never, perhaps, was painted a more striking representation of the Saviour's agony — of that moving scene in the garden where He "went forward a little and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him." It has been stated that the artist's treatment of the subject was the result of a dream, in which everything appeared to him as he afterwards put it on canvas. For some weeks he had been perplexed just as to what pose his central figure should assume, and he had made numerous studies which were cast aside as unworthy. It is hardly necessary to say that, striking as the man's features were who sat as model, they have become transfigured and glorified in the hands of the master. We see in the dim obscurity of the background a group of the disciples and the outlines of Jerusalem silhouetted against the lightening horizon. "Gethsemane" is one of the finest examples of the modern school of religious painting.

The chief interest which attaches to M. Gervex's "Winter," which shows us the head of a charming girl, apparelled in furs, with a background of falling snow-flakes, is the singular fate which overtook the model, a Mlle. Lafontaine. This young lady was not a professional model, but had sat, nevertheless, to some of the most eminent French painters, and had previously impersonated "Summer" for this same artist. When she was asked to pose for a companion picture, "Winter," Mlle. Lafontaine, greatly to the painter's surprise, expressed the deepest reluctance, saying that she dreaded winter, that her mother had died of exposure in a snowstorm, and that she would only be tempting fate. The painter laughed and explained that the sitting for "Winter" would only involve a posing for the head in furs, chiefly in his studio, with only one or two outdoor sittings to get the effect of snow-clad trees and the falling flakes, and that there would be no exposure at all. Whereupon the sitter explained that she had a curious superstition on the subject; that Mlle. Granier, who had



"UNINVITED GUESTS." By S. E. WALLER.

(By permission of W. Y. Baker, Esq.)

sat to the painter Brissot for that artist's "Winter," had actually caught a chill and died ten days afterwards of pneumonia Mlle. Lafontaine ultimately was coaxed out of her fears, and, yielding to the painter's entreaties, gave him twelve sittings for the picture. But so strong was the force of suggestion that towards the end she invariably complained of feeling cold, despite the fact that the studio was very warm and the weather outside not cold even for December.

analogous cases in the annals of modern painting, as witness the youth of honourable antecedents who sat to Frederick Walker as a burglar, and a few weeks later was actually arrested in the act of burglary; or the model who sat for the executioner of Charles I., whose fancied crime, we are told, afterwards drove him to the madhouse.

Few scenes are said to appeal more to the Englishman than those connected with the racecourse and the hunting-field. Of these,

"CHARITY." By BRITON RIVIÈRE, R.A.
(By permission of Lady Wantage. Copyright by Messrs. Raphael Tuck & Sons, publishers of the photogravure.)

When M. Gervex laughingly called her "Mademoiselle L'Hiver" (Miss Winter) she threw up her hands and implored him not to call her so. Some time afterwards, when the famous Dr. Charcot's attention was drawn to the case, he stated that it was purely one of suggestion, which had acted on the nerves and actually induced physical disorder. At any rate, the young lady continued to complain of cold, took to her bed, and, a fortnight after the final sitting for this picture of "Winter," died of pneumonia. The story was taken up by the Paris newspapers and the scientific reviews, with the result that, for a time, this picture had a great popularity. It remains to be added that there have been

none offers more thrilling excitement than a well-ridden steeplechase. In Mr. Blinks's picture the competitors are seen in full motion. It is the most critical moment of the race. Much has been staked on the favourite, when, lo! just as he has cleared the hedge and his rider thinks he is safely over the creek, his hind legs slip on the treacherous marge and he is down. That is the cry which springs from a thousand throats—"He is down! The favourite is down!" From that catastrophe he can never recover. Before he can regain his legs several of his rivals have passed him and the race is won and lost.

It is not often we get such a vivid and

"GETHSEMANE." By HEINRICH HOFMANN.

(By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co., London and New York.)

unconventional glimpse of fairy-land as M. Latoucheaffords in his tableau, "The Fairies' Garden."

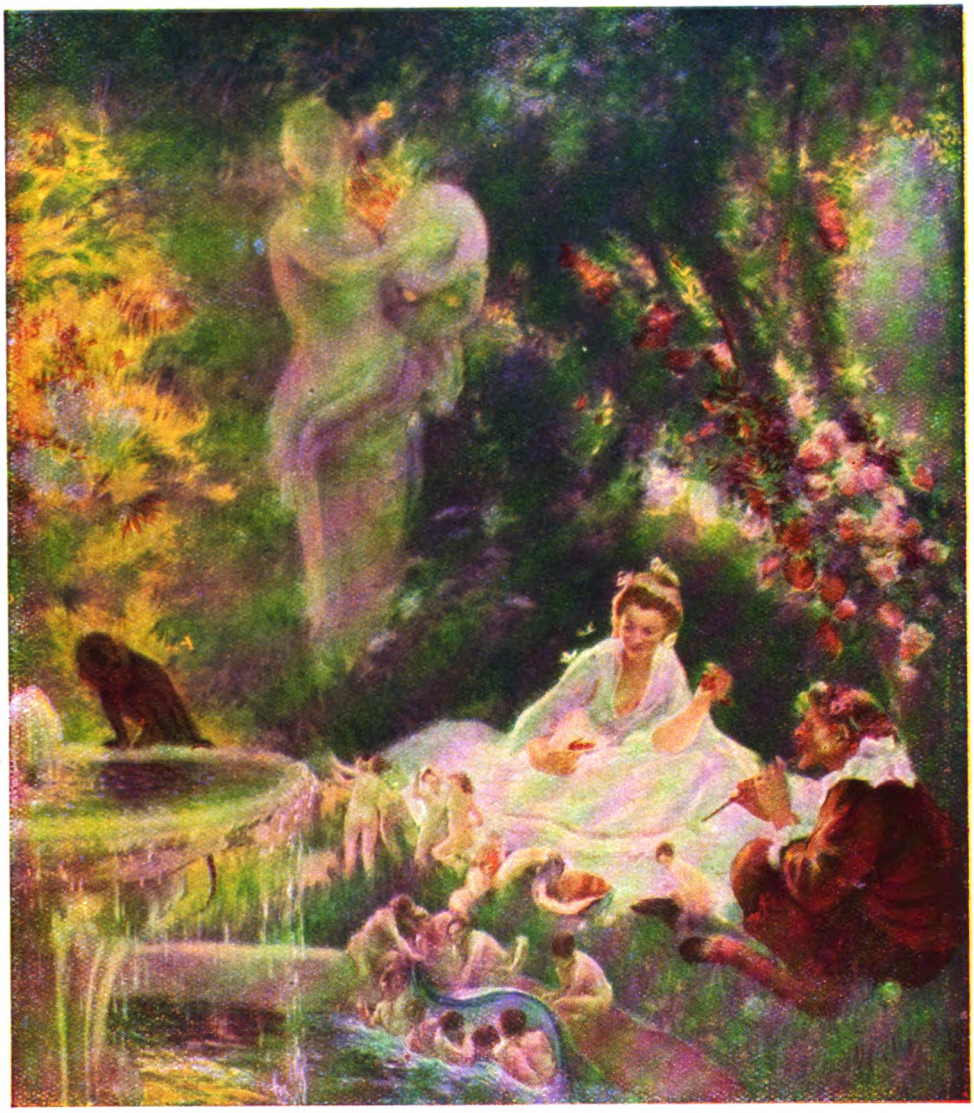
"The fairy in my picture," writes M. Latouche, "is descending into her enchanted garden, filled with flowers. She seats herself by the side of the basin and at the foot of the statue, and having culled cherries as a kind of amulets for her ears, she calls the genius of the wood (the faun or satyr), with his melodious flute, who, inspired, celebrates the joy of Nature and the love of flowers. At the same time the little sprites hidden in the grass surge forth, dancing their joyous round, while the pet monkey sports with the drops of water in the basin."

"WINTER." By H. GERVEX.
(By permission of A. Le Vasseur & Co., Paris, Owners of the Copyright.)

As may be guessed, it proved no simple matter for the artist to group his figures and give them the poetry of motion, not to mention the task of enduing each with a distinctive character of her own, and yet one properly belonging to the

"A STEEPLECHASE—THE WATER." By THOMAS BLINKS.
Copyright, 1904, by Photographische Gesellschaft.
(By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co., London and New York.)

denizens of fairyland. It will be noticed that M. Latouche has successfully resisted the temptation to bestow wings on his fairies, and this naturally led to some perhaps captious criticism when the picture was first exhibited. "We have noted a tendency," wrote one critic, "in the painters of the younger generation who undertake classical or fanciful subjects to aim at originality by abandoning all the traditional attributes and accessories with which Poetry and Tradition have clothed the heroes and heroines of mythology. Thus Diana is painted without her bow, Mercury without his helmet and sandals, and Venus without her beauty. Wingless angels being now the rule, it only remained for M. Latouche to clip the wings from his fairies and make them move about by an invisible agency—perhaps psychic force." To this the artist might have replied in the spirit of one far greater who was severely taken to task for

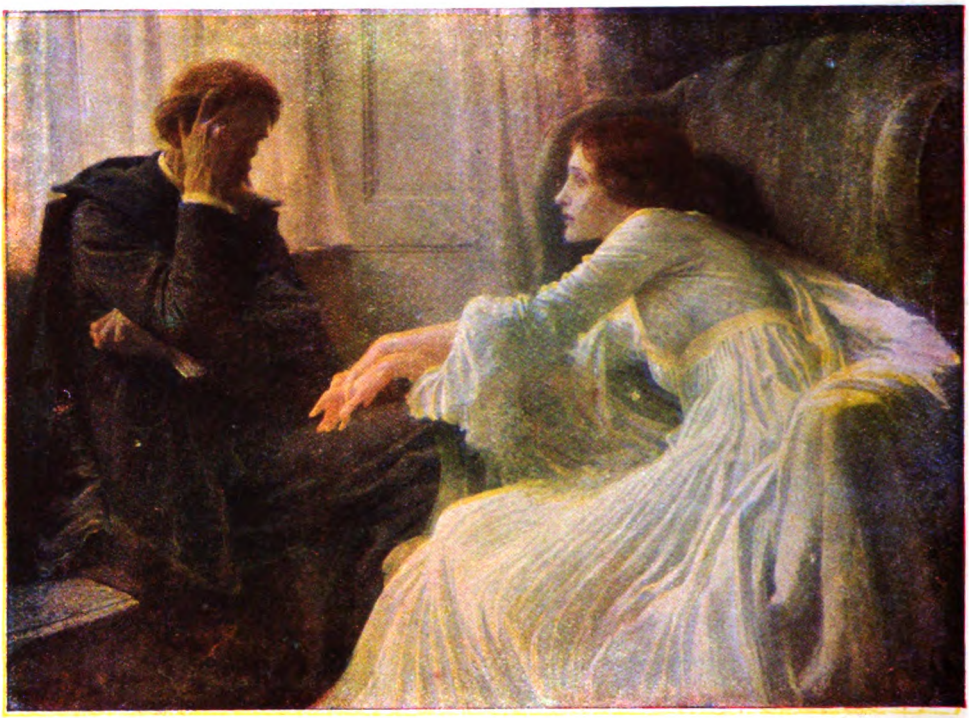


"THE FAIRIES' GARDEN." By G. LATOUCHE.

(By permission of Goupil & Co., 25, Bedford Street, Strand, London, Owners of the Copyright.)

bestowing six toes on one of his angels. "Who ever," cried his critic, "saw an angel with six toes?" "Who," replied the painter, "ever saw one with less?"

On no picture of recent years has deep emotion been better painted than Mr. Frank Dicksee, R.A., has painted it in "The Confession." The relationship between the man and the woman is left vague—it is Mr. Dicksee's way in some of his subject-pictures to be a little enigmatical—although the probabilities would strongly point to that of her revelation has given rise in his heart and soul. The sternly-set features and the swollen veins on the uplifted hand would seem to indicate an anger which he is restraining with difficulty, and she evidently fears the worst. The man, it may be noted, is wearing a black Inverness travelling cape, such as were fashionable a few years ago, suggesting that he has just returned from a journey, a long and arduous journey, to be met on his arrival home by the shock of this confession.



"THE CONFESSION." By FRANK DICKSEE, R.A.

(By permission of Lady Wantage.)

husband. But there can be no mistaking the terrible nature of the confession which the woman is making to the man. Her fair young face is wan with suffering, her slender figure, clad in a loose, flowing white robe, is bent forward from the arm-chair in which she is seated, and the outstretched hands are fast entwined, the whole attitude vividly expressing remorse, suspense, nervous excitement. The early evening light falls upon the stricken figure from the curtained window, but the man is sitting with his back to it, and she can divine little from the darkened face, partly hidden by the hand upon which it rests, as to the poignant emotion to which

"The Confession" was Mr. Dicksee's chief contribution to the Royal Academy in 1896, when it was at once bought by Lord Wantage for his collection at Lockinge. In 1900 it won a silver medal at the Paris Exhibition.

In the next picture — "Paying Her Respects to His High Mightiness," by Tito Conti, and now in the galleries of the Royal Holloway College—we are introduced to a seventeenth-century interior—at the period when Mazarin was all-powerful in France. Michelet tells us that Anne of Austria was surrounded by a thousand priceless gifts which her admirers and satellites had sent to her from every corner of the earth, and that

"PAYING HER RESPECTS TO HIS HIGH MIGHTINESS." By TITO CONTI

(By permission of the Governors of the Royal Holloway College.)

"PAPILLON." By C. DE LORT.
(By permission of Goupil & Co., 25, Bedford Street, Strand, London, Owners of the Copyright.)

"THE ROMAN DANCE." By C. SACCAGGI.
(By permission of Goupil & Co., 25, Bedford Street, Strand, London, Owners of the Copyright.)

her boudoir betrayed not only her own passion for objects of art, but also that of the Cardinal. Amongst these gifts was a coloured china statuette of that then almost fabulous personage, the ruler of far Cathay—at least, it was probably so represented—although we may doubt if it were more than a likeness of one of his mandarins. It is a charming idea—that the lady who owed allegiance to no earthly potentate, whose smiles and favours were besought by the most illustrious on the globe, should be confronted by this pompous little effigy as she emerged from her bedchamber of a morning, and should graciously make obeisance to the only person who rigidly withheld his smile and his approval! True, the conceit is not novel, for other monarchs have even prostrated themselves before their household pets; and did not Louis XIII. once profess to take his commands from a favourite poodle?

The vagaries and escapades of Marie Antoinette in the young days of her queenhood have furnished the theme of many pens. Once she hailed a fiacre in the streets of Paris, unguardedly revealing herself by her remark to her escort, amidst peals of laughter, "Fancy my driving about in a fiacre!" She was not afraid to shock the courtiers by playing ball, or battledore and shuttlecock. She gave out-of-door parties and children's dances, to which all the inhabitants of Versailles who presented themselves in decent apparel were admitted. She would even open the dance herself with some well-conducted youth, and afterwards stroll among the crowd talking affably to all the company. There were some who, startled at the unwonted sight of a Sovereign so treating her subjects as fellow-creatures, confessed a fear that such familiarity was not without its dangers. When at Choisy she gave water-parties on the river in boats with awnings, which she called gondolias, rowing down as far as the very entrance to Paris. She developed a passion for donkeys, and actually rode about on these animals. Later she became addicted to horse-racing and gaming. She long continued eager in the pursuit of amusement and novelty. Her craving for excitement led her to attend masquerades and to make other somewhat undignified appearances in public. On one occasion, driving in her carriage near Versailles, a peasant child, playing on the road, ran in front of the horses. The carriage was stopped and the child taken up. Little Jacques screamed lustily, kicking the Queen and her ladies with all his might and resisting all attempts to pacify him. Naturally the decorum of the palace, when the Queen came in holding the peasant boy by the hand, roaring out that he wanted his grandmother and his brothers and sisters, was considerably disturbed. Nevertheless, the Queen resolved to adopt the urchin, decked him out in silk and lace, and re-christened him Armand. No wonder that in her youth Marie Antoinette well earned among the wondering Parisians the sobriquet of "Papillon"—the Butterfly—the title given by C. de Lort to his picture reproduced on the preceding page.

Each country, each clime, each age has its own terpsichorean delights, and a whole world of taste separates the dignified gyrations of the Greek maiden from the dance of the nautch girl or the motions of the bolero, cachuca, or, let us add, those of the *première danseuse* of the modern ballet. "The Roman Dance," by the Italian painter Signor Saccaggi, reveals to us a bevy of Roman girls whose figures undulate gracefully to the soft melody of a pipe. As they sway hither and thither in the marble court or balcony, their left hands entwined, with their right they scatter roses and pæonies. In the distance looms up through the twilight the dome of the Capitol. It is a scene of youth and gaiety, of beauty of form and movement and voluptuous delight, which we fear, alas! is to-day only to be seen across the footlights of the mimic world, and no longer a familiar spectacle even in Rome or the cities of the South.

"Christmas à la Carte."

By WINIFRED GRAHAM.

I.

WHEN Miss Victoria Manners took her walks abroad, it was with the stern resolution to teach mademoiselle English. In fact, where the acquiring of languages was concerned, it seemed at all times their positions were reversed. The French governess hoped soon to master sufficient English to manage an hotel in Normandy, and, of course, it was understood that Victoria, known in her home circle as "Topples," should frequently visit that establishment, bringing with her a large contingent of prosperous relations.

As a baby Miss Manners toppled so habitually to the ground that the name fitted her to perfection. It was easy to understand that the frequent repetition of this now historical performance always produced smiles instead of tears. It was characteristic of Topples to smile, so round, comfortable, and sturdy was she, with cheeks which burned such a ruddy colour in the summer that all through the winter months they never lost the healthy glow given them by the sun. Her curls were soft and glossy, and she had just the pretty plumpness of babyhood which in no way impeded activity.

Mademoiselle was accustomed to her pupil's inquiring turn of mind, and aired her newly-attained English with much pride while replying to Topples's frequent interrogations.

They were walking in a London street, Miss Victoria Manners, the picture of propriety, wearing very high boots and fresh white furs. Suddenly she paused before a restaurant, and studied a large bill of fare written in aggressively distinct letters. Above the board which chronicled the dishes were three French words—"*à la carte.*"

"What does that mean?" demanded Topples, pointing to the phrase.

"*À la carte,*" repeated mademoiselle; "don't you know? It would say that you can select anything on ze menu if you pay for it, or take all if you pay separately for each dish."

Topples, having satisfied her curiosity, passed on, remembering this was Christmas Eve, and that everybody's dinner would have turkey and plum-pudding to-morrow. As she ran up the steps of the big, old-fashioned house she wondered if she should find any more letters with lovely pictures inside. She danced about impatiently till the door opened, then ran in, and picked up a large envelope on the hall table.

"Yes," she gasped, "it is for me—another Christmas-card."

She drew out a conventional design familiar to all venders of Yuletide art, and gazed upon it rapturously, as if indeed it were something almost sacred in its beauty. Her eyes travelled from the big horseshoe entwined with mistletoe-leaves and holly to the gold-lettered verse below. She read the words aloud to mademoiselle:—

> May Christmas be jolly,
> With plenty of holly,
> And joy for a happy New Year.
> I drink to your health
> And I wish you much wealth,
> Thus I send you a greeting, my dear.

"It is from Aunt Ellen," she said. "I like it best of all the cards I've had. Do you know, I like it so much I think I shall give it to Chion?"

Whenever Topples loved anything very dearly her natural instinct prompted her to

part with her possession to a little friend in the small house over the way. Nobody ever inherited such a spirit of appreciation as the artist's son at No. 15.

He and his father were strangely alike; each knew the pleasures and pains of living. It was Chion who first initiated Topples into the mysteries of being "hard up." His innocent prattle opened out a new world to Topples's busy brain, and, since he had no mother, she, with that quaint maternal instinct which slumbers in the breast of every little girl, tried to mother him in her own unsophisticated fashion.

"Mademoiselle," she said, coaxingly, "we are early for lunch; let me run with this card to Chion, because you know a horseshoe means good luck, and he says they want some good luck badly."

Not waiting for the word of consent, Topples sped down the steps, and was away across the road before her instructress had time to remonstrate.

The door of the artist's house stood ajar, and Topples, sure of her welcome, bounded in breathlessly.

Along the narrow passage which led from the hall door to his father's studio Chion was playing marbles with a strange man, who appeared to be something of a champion at the game. An appreciative "Oh!" echoed from the boy's lips as Topples came unobserved upon the scene. She wondered who the stranger could be, for he did not look like a friend, and he was certainly not a servant. A girl with a dirty apron, who occasionally boxed Chion's ears and then smothered him with unwelcome kisses, was the sole representative of Mr. Faber's domestic staff.

Suddenly the two merry-makers became conscious of a third presence, and as Chion ran forward to meet Topples the man withdrew, seating himself on a bench by the studio door.

"Who's that?" asked Miss Manners, with a note of suspicion in her voice. She always felt Chion must be her property, and should reserve marble-playing, and all such alluring pastimes, for the hours they spent together.

"He has come to sit here," explained the boy with the tumbled hair. "I don't mean that he sits to my father for a portrait, or anything of that kind, but he stays in the house to see we don't take anything away."

Topples looked mystified.

"He has got some children at home, you know, and they have seen Santa Claus. He

"CHION WAS PLAYING MARBLES WITH A STRANGE MAN."

was telling me about them before we began playing marbles," continued Chion, volubly. "He is a real good sort, and quite understands about people being sold up. He says it happens every day, even at Christmas-time. I was rather glad to hear that."

Suddenly Chion seemed old. He puckered his brow, and spoke with precision, like some funny miniature prophet, who oddly enough found himself in a smocked pinafore and socks.

Topples was out of her depth. She dimly realized that the man on the bench, whose children had seen Santa Claus, represented sorrow in a mysterious and unusual manner. For the first time in her life she felt shy and confused, and the shyness took the form of wanting to run away. She held out Aunt Ellen's card, and, thrusting it into Chion's hand, whispered: "There's a horseshoe for luck. Mademoiselle is waiting, and I think she's angry with me for coming."

Before Chion could say "Thank you" Topples had flown, her white furs fluttering in the wind, making her look like an animated snow-flake on its hurrying journey to earth.

At lunch she was very silent, and her mother, whose sympathies were quick to catch any little shadow, noticed the troubled expression on her child's face. When the meal was over and mademoiselle had returned to the schoolroom, Mrs. Manners took Topples on her knee and asked if anything were the matter.

"BEFORE CHION COULD SAY 'THANK YOU' TOPPLES HAD FLOWN."

"I was thinking about the words on the Christmas-card I gave Chion," she said, nestling to the soft shoulder, with its frills of lace, which made such a pleasant pillow for Victoria's curls. "You know, mother, mademoiselle told me that when they write up '*à la carte*' outside a restaurant, it means the people who go in to dinner can chose any of the dishes that are written on the card if they pay for them. Now, I'm afraid Chion won't have a Christmas *à la carte*, for on my card it wished him everything jolly, with plenty of holly, and much wealth. They have no holly at No. 15, and I don't think they can be wealthy, because there is a man sitting there who knows all about people being sold up, and he is staying to see they don't take anything away."

Mrs. Manners received the news with a very grave face.

"Oh, poor things!" she said.

"Chion told me the other day that, instead of painting a portrait last spring, his father did a beautiful big picture of mermaids on the rocks, which somehow didn't happen to get hung in the Academy, and no one has bought it since. He has been altering it lately, and he said to Chion: 'We shall soon be on the rocks like those mermaids,' which made him think they were going to the sea for a holiday, but that didn't happen either."

Mrs. Manners turned to a pile of letters she had laid aside on a small table, and began searching among them hurriedly.

"Why did I not think of Mr. Faber?" she asked herself, as she found a closely-written sheet on foreign paper, and read it silently.

"Is that Uncle Tom's letter?" asked Topples.

"Yes. I gave you the Australian stamp," pointing to the mutilated envelope. "He has made a big fortune, and is coming home."

"He is bringing me a new aunt."

Mrs. Manners smiled, for the pages contained a glowing description of Uncle Tom's young bride, the beautiful Brisbane heiress, who was to burst upon London society within the next few months.

Once more she eagerly scanned a request which lengthened itself into a long postscript:—

"You kindly offered to help me in any way possible. Will you take a house for us in Mayfair? I enclose details of rooms, etc., and I want you to find some person with ideas, who will make it a matter of business to decorate and glorify the place. Choose an artist if possible, and let him paint imaginative friezes in all the reception-rooms, and provide pictures. We should like to walk straight into a really artistic home."

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Manners, "you will come for a drive with me this afternoon, and buy Chion some toys. Oh! and the holly that was mentioned on the card. It seems a pity (laughing) that he should not have a Christmas *à la carte*. Was anything else mentioned, except holly and wealth?"

"There was a horseshoe for luck," replied Topples.

"Well, I rather fancy the luck is coming. I believe I shall be able to arrange for that too. We will get some sweets, and a plum-pudding ready cooked, and just the fattest turkey we can find."

The little girl slid from her mother's lap to the floor, with an expressive chuckle of content, and hugged Mrs. Manners's knees in a spasm of childish gratitude.

"That will be the nicest thing we could possibly do for Christmas Eve," she gasped, her cheeks glowing and her hazel eyes dancing with delight. Then she whispered, "May we have the carriage quite directly, so that Chion's Christmas can begin at once?"

"You know," she suggested, presently, "I have been thinking I could take the white beard and wig which daddy wore as Father Christmas last year; then, if Mr. Faber dressed up, it would make it much more amusing for Chion."

Mrs. Manners replied it was possible the artist might not feel inclined to masquerade; but Topples disagreed.

"He was always ready for some fun," she told her mother, confidently—"even when the pictures did not sell."

"I don't think you will have time to take the presents to Chion yourself," said Mrs. Manners. "You see, it is Lady Lumley's children's party this afternoon, and I can drop you on our way back. Mademoiselle will fetch you about seven o'clock."

With a thrill of excitement Topples remembered this was the date of *the* party of the year. No one understood the science of entertaining like Lady Lumley. Her gatherings were red-letter days to all fortunate juveniles lucky enough to receive an invitation. Topples could well recall the mirth and delight of the last festivity in that popular Grosvenor Square house. What surprises awaited the children, and how magnificent were the presents and bonbon boxes, handed to them from the giant Christmas-tree which stood in the centre of the ball-room! The Lumley girls had confided to Victoria that this time there would be funny folk dressed up, who could do all sorts of extraordinary things to make one laugh. Only the night before Topples lay awake for hours, speculating on the joys of the following afternoon. But somehow the pathetic sight of Chion playing marbles with the man who meant sorrow put all thoughts of the coming dissipation out of the child's head. Now she asked herself—"Would her mother's gifts mean the same to Chion if she, Topples, were not there to join in the excitement of opening parcels and exploring their contents?" She knew by childish instinct that the boy relied on her. He was a lonely atom of humanity, with only a full-grown father and that strange person who sat in the hall for companions.

Would they laugh as much, would there be any dressing-up, if Topples stayed away? She knew the answer only too well—knew it

as her heart sank, and dreams of Grosvenor Square floated on the clouds of "might have been." It wasn't easy to watch the vision disappearing on the horizon of untasted pleasures; it wasn't easy to assure her mother that she would far, far rather go to Chion at No. 15 and spend her Christmas Eve with him. It was terribly awkward for Topples to keep down the lump which threatened to rise in her throat, to smile and talk lightly, while her every inclination lay subdued upon the altar of friendship. But she was artful enough to keep her face turned away, and to move quickly about the room, avoiding her mother's gaze while the discussion took place; and if, by some strange chance, Mrs. Manners guessed there was a reason for Topples's averted head, possibly she said within her soul, "It is well with the child."

So they started off to the shops together, Victoria sporting no party frock, but driving in the same white furs she had worn for walking in the morning. Beneath the snug embrace of her spotless cream coat there blossomed the white flower of an unspoken sacrifice, deep in the soil of a commandment which forbids that the right hand shall know what the left hand doeth. She talked brightly enough, speculating upon Chion's tastes, his likes and dislikes, giving various reasons as she suggested various toys. Only now and again a slight tremble of her lips betrayed that within a great struggle had been fought and a victory gained, no less great for its childlike simplicity.

II.

THE artist and his son were alone in the studio. A small oil-stove burned in a corner of the room behind a red glass, which threw a glow on Chion's face as he sat upon a three-legged wooden stool. To the man surveying the small figure it seemed to reflect the crimson of his own heart's blood. He could not bear the idea that it was Christmas Eve, and he had nothing for his child. He tried to think what he could give the boy from the store of his imagination. He must weave some wonderful Christmas

"THE ARTIST AND HIS SON WERE ALONE IN THE STUDIO."

story to clothe the nakedness of these dismal surroundings, and paint the scene gold with the enchanted brush of make-belief.

But, oddly enough, Chion, who loved stories, and thirsted for them at all hours of the day, seemed in no mood for childish romances on this particular evening of the year. His little head was busy with real things, the things that mattered, and he surprised Mr. Faber by interrupting "Once upon a time" with a direct question:—

"Is Jane quite, quite truthful?"

Mr. Faber mentally reviewed the poorly-clad servant-girl, who not long since had confessed, with tears of penitence, to having "tidied-up" the studio, a crime which led to the mislaying of some first sketches, invaluable to their creator in the throes of a new subject-picture.

"She might or she might not be truthful," he said, guardedly. "Why do you ask?"

"Because," whispered the boy, leaning against his father's knee, "she told me that when all our things had been taken I should be sent away too. She knows about the place I shall have to live in, because she was brought up there. It is called a Workhouse."

Mr. Faber caught his little son suddenly in his arms and held him close against his breast.

"How dare Jane talk to you like that?" he muttered, fiercely, his eyes flashing. "It is utterly untrue. You and I, boy, will stick together if we have to take to the pavement and collect coppers. Fancy me, as a street artist, drawing mermaids in coloured chalks!"

Despite his anger, he laughed at the idea, while Chion's face brightened considerably.

"That would be fun," cried the child. "You'd have to paint ships; they always have ships on the pavement, and beautiful blue waves."

"Don't talk of ships, old boy," said his father, stroking the mop of fair hair. "I have waited for mine to come in all this last year, and here is Christmas Eve, without the ghost of a bit of luck coming our way. Why, even Santa Claus has forgotten you, for I happen to know he won't be calling to-night."

"I don't mind," said Chion, bravely, seeing the man's distress. "You are my Santa Claus, daddy, and I don't want anyone else."

"Oh! come, you mustn't be like Jane and tell untruths."

They caught the sound of steps in the narrow hall. Mr. Faber started uneasily. He fancied he heard muffled voices, and as Chion ran to the door he snatched his arm and pulled him back.

"Wait," he said. "Let them come to us."

He felt sure it was something unpleasant. Possibly he and his child were to be turned out of house and home this very night. He kept fast hold of the boy, and Chion knew by the grip of his father's hand all the vast unrest, the smothered anxiety, the fury against fate, which burned beneath the surface of his still manner.

They spoke no word; they just paused defiantly on the defensive, Mr. Faber glaring at the studio door as if his eyes would have annihilated with a glance the intruder who dared break in upon their privacy. Already he seemed to see cruel hands removing his much-loved pictures from the walls. How could he bear to watch them go, the work of long days—and long dreams, which might at any hour realize the price he set upon them?

The door opened abruptly; the intruders outside had not even the civility to knock, nor was the handle turned with any diffidence. On the threshold an utterly unexpected sight met the artist's fierce gaze. Little Miss Manners stood in the doorway, her cheeks aflame and her eyes sparkling. Then a shrill childish voice announced, "Father Christmas!"

A shamefaced individual shuffled forward, no less a person than the man who meant sorrow, pressed into the service of merry-making, his awkward figure gowned in a crimson robe and his features disguised by a false white beard, while a fur cap with sham snowflakes of cotton-wool gave a travelled appearance to his head. He was heavily-laden with parcels bearing the name "Chion" conspicuously, and these he deposited on the model's platform, a box of crackers tumbling open as he unburdened himself of luggage which must surely have fallen from the skies.

With a cry of delight the boy bounded forward.

"I found Father Christmas on the doorstep, so I let him in," explained Topples, with the bold untruth permitted by the season. "The horseshoe I brought you this morning was for luck, you know."

The child stared breathlessly at the many gifts.

"They can't be all for me!" he gasped.

"Every one," declared Topples, proudly. "Father Christmas left this house to the last."

The artist spoke no word, but he moved towards the small girl like a man in a dream

"HE MOVED TOWARDS THE SMALL GIRL LIKE A MAN IN A DREAM AND, BENDING DOWN, KISSED HER REVERENTLY."

and, bending down, kissed her reverently. She saw tears in his eyes, and the sight of them reminded her there was something for him too.

"Mother sent you this letter," she said, drawing an envelope from her muff. "I expect it's a Christmas-card."

He went back to the stove, that Chion and Father Christmas might not see the emotional working of his face. There, by the light which shone through the crimson glass, he read of the house in Mayfair which his art was to beautify, while folded in the letter a cheque for the mermaid picture curled itself lovingly round the creamy vellum of Mrs. Manners's note-paper.

Just for a moment he feared the whole scene must be an illusion of his overwrought brain, but Chion's excited voice dispelled the misgiving.

"Daddy," he cried, "Father Christmas has brought a lovely box of coloured chalks. He must have known we were talking of the pictures on the pavement."

Mr. Faber came forward with a light step, a tremulous smile lighting up his face and giving it quite a boyish expression.

"We sha'n't have to go to the pavement—or to the wall either," he said, "for my Christmas-card has dispersed all the shadows, Chion. Let us ask Father Christmas to share our Christmas Eve supper. I see he has brought plenty of good fare, and I dare say his journey with the reindeer has given him an appetite."

Chion looked long and curiously into the face of Father Christmas, with a knowing expression.

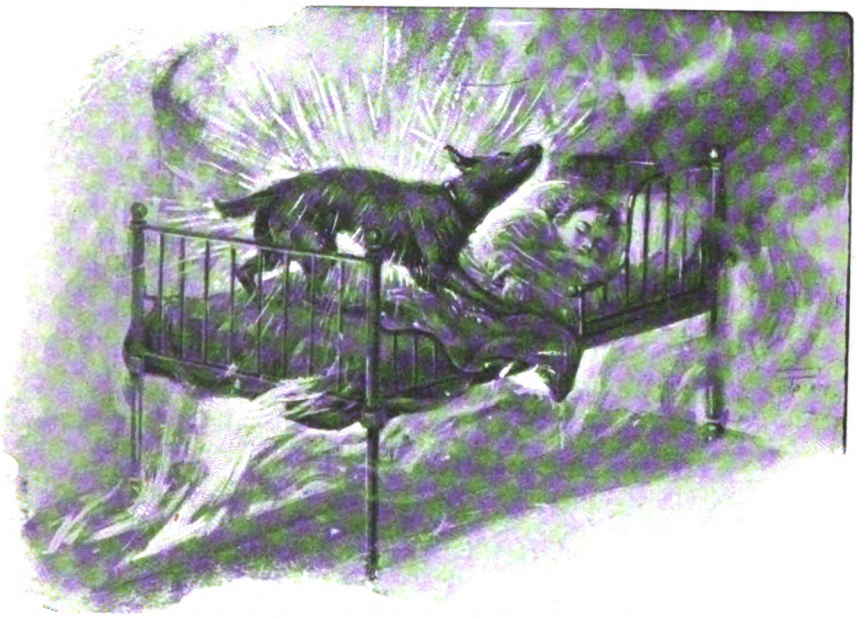
"Now I understand," he said, "how it was your children saw Santa Claus."

Topples laughed as she slipped her hand into Mr. Faber's.

Somehow this was even nicer than Grosvenor Square.

"Chion is too sharp, for us," she said, in a funny, old-fashioned, motherly way; "that's the worst of boys!"

DOG STORIES.



HOW TERENCE SAVED HIS CHILD-MISTRESS FROM THE FIRE.

IT is not strange that of no animal in the world are so many anecdotes related as of the dog, for not only has the dog's fidelity and sagacity passed into a proverb, but he of all the four-footed creation enjoys the most intimate relationship with man. Horses we may know and love; for the feline creation we may have a deep-seated fondness; but the horse does not join us in our romps, he does not enter our houses and lie down with us on our beds; the cat does not follow at our heels through forest and meadow, or guard us during our sleeping hours. No dumb animal has earned by its valour and integrity such devotion as the dog. Stories of dogs have, therefore, always been popular, especially those exhibiting qualities which more nearly approximate those of man.

Recently we have made extensive inquiries amongst the leading dog-owners, breeders, and dog-lovers throughout the kingdom in order to ascertain what, in their opinion — and whose judgment could be better?—were the half-dozen best dog stories in existence. Out of the hundreds of replies received we select those comprised in this article, and leave it to the reader to award a palm for absolute excellence.

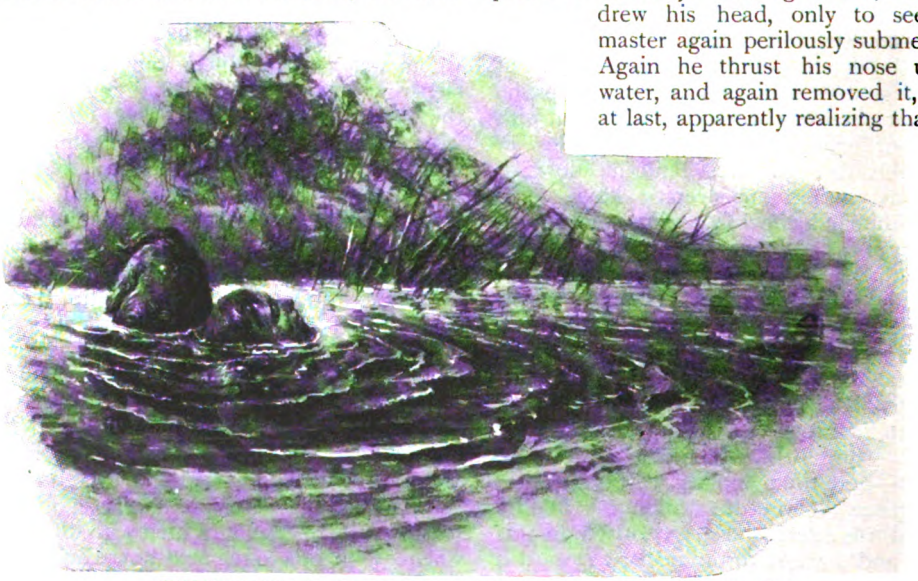
Amongst dog-lovers who have contributed to this article there seems a general consensus of opinion that the story of Terence is considered unbeatable.

"There was," writes Mrs. J. M. McDonald, of Oxford, "an Irish terrier called Terence in a family in Dover. He became very much attached to two little girls, the younger of whom was about eighteen months old, who slept in different though adjoining rooms at the top of the house. The elder child slept with the nurse. On the same landing was a sort of lumber-room containing a cistern. It was Terence's custom to sleep outside in the passage. The family had long discountenanced this practice, but the dog was persistent. About three o'clock one November morning fire broke out in the chamber immediately beneath that occupied by the younger of the little girls. Soon there was a crackling and roaring, which not only attracted Terence's attention and set him barking, but very quickly aroused the other inmates of the house. The nurse was seized with panic. She grabbed up the elder girl from her bed and, evidently forgetting all about her other charge, ran to the window which communicated with the roof, whence approach to the next house and safety was attained. The mother, an invalid, was

told that the nurse had both children safe. In the meantime the flames had actually burnt through the flooring and had seized on the drapery of the bed where the apparently doomed child lay sleeping. Terence, having barked vigorously to no purpose in the dark, now the room was lit up attempted to seize the child and drag her from the bed. He could not manage to lift the weight. Thereupon he rushed to the cistern, jumped in, and then hurried back to the child's room. Springing on the bed, he shook over the child the water which had soaked into his coat during his immersion in the cistern. This he repeated several times, at length succeeding in putting out the flames, which at one time had a good hold on the bed-clothing. When the firemen forced their way into the room they found the child practically uninjured, with the dog mounting guard with his wet body over her."

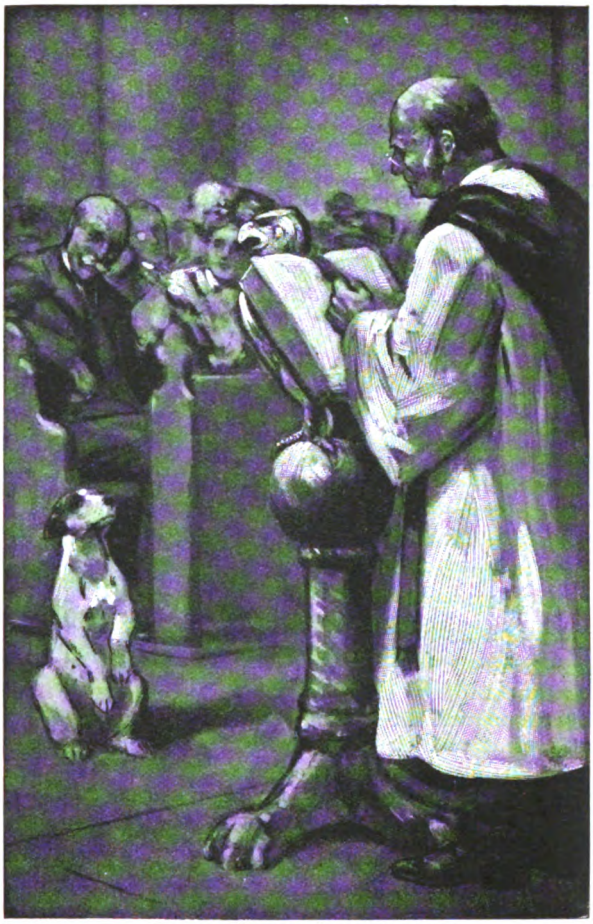
Showing the wonderful memory a dog possesses, this story, sent by Mrs. Gerald Spencer, is very interesting: "A gentleman had a Scottish terrier, which he took with him one spring to some fishing he had in the North of Scotland, beyond Dingwall. On the return journey South the gentleman got out at some small station, and the dog somehow, in the hurry of getting into the train again, was left behind. A kindly porter took it home, where his children got fond of it, and it was cared for and seemed happy, but every day, quite punctually, through the summer heat and the winter snow, the little terrier trotted down the three parts of a mile from the porter's cottage to the station and met the midday train. The people living near said you could tell the time by seeing this little dark grey dog hurrying down the road every day. At last he was rewarded. The next spring his master again returned South, and passed the station. He saw his little dog, which jumped into the train with him, and they were borne away together."

"A spaniel," writes Dr. G. Lawrence, "belonging to a gentleman in the neighbourhood of Hounslow had long shown an extraordinary affection for his master. The latter became a confirmed dipsomaniac. He separated from his wife, and the home was broken up. The dog, Wallack, alone remained faithful. When his master was under the influence of liquor Wallack never left his side. His tender solicitude became a byword in the district. One day, as Wallack's master was returning from a debauch, he fell, by some accident or another, into a shallow pond by the roadside, which, shallow as it was, was yet sufficient to submerge a recumbent figure. The drunken man's flounderings only made matters worse. In vain Wallack, with what I call super-canine strength, tugged at his master's collar in an attempt to lift his face above the surface of the water. Seeing that this was futile he resorted to the expedient of thrusting his own head under that of his master, his object being probably to make a pillow of his body. Failing in this, he withdrew his head, only to see his master again perilously submerged. Again he thrust his nose under water, and again removed it, until at last, apparently realizing that the



WALLACK SAVING HIS MASTER FROM DROWNING AT THE COST OF HIS OWN LIFE.

only way he could save his master's life was by remaining under water himself, Wallack deliberately remained under water for several minutes. At the end of that time help arrived, and Wallack's owner, who was still in a state of unconsciousness from the effects of the drink, was pulled from the margin of the pond, and after him Wallack himself. All attempts at resuscitation of the dog failed, and he thus died a victim of his faithfulness and, it may be added, his extraordinary sagacity. The whole episode was witnessed at a distance by a gentleman paralyzed in his limbs, who was then seated before his bedroom window. There were no servants within call, but the moment one appeared she was sent to effect a rescue."



HOW TOPSY "BEGGED" IN THE CHURCH.

Mrs. Spencer, of Ewell, Surrey, sends us a selection of really excellent dog stories, from which we extract the following:—

"It is wonderful how quick dogs are to understand certain phrases in conversation in which they are concerned. For instance, we have with us always three Dandies, who, if they cannot talk themselves, certainly understand a great deal of what is being said. At about ten o'clock at night we had been accustomed to say: 'It is time for the dogs to go out,' or variations of this, when there would be a stampede for the door. Now, anybody who knows anything about Dandies knows how very little it takes to start them fighting. In fact, this is the only failure in their altogether charming disposition. So it was always a race across the hall as to which should get to the door first, when, if there was any delay in opening it, which there naturally was with three dogs pressing against it, they immediately fell upon each other, and nearly every day ended in a furious combat. This, of course, could not be allowed to go on, so we changed our tactics, and when ten o'clock came we spelt out the exciting sentence, and the dogs quietly followed their master out of the room. However, they soon learned to spell, so we gave that up and started French, which they were some time in mastering, but they know that now, and in despair we have rushed into German. This, I am sure, they will soon understand, so our only resource in the future will be the deaf and dumb alphabet.

"A friend of mine," continues Mrs. Spencer, "once possessed a small mongrel terrier which had a queer habit of invariably sitting up when in any doubt or difficulty. One day, when she was taken into an adjoining town on a shopping expedition, she was so unfortunate as to get lost. Poor Topsy ran up and down the streets for a long time, vainly hunting for her friends, and then a bright thought struck her. She made straight for the church, where a service was going on, and the congregation was much scandalized at the sight of a small dog being chivvied up and down the aisles and between the seats by an indignant verger, armed with a silver rod. The Lessons were being read, and Topsy, in her anxiety to escape from the excited verger, ran up the chancel till she got to the clergyman engaged in reading, when, not knowing, I suppose, what next to do, she sat up exactly

in front of him. It was a trying moment, and he afterwards confessed that it was with the utmost difficulty he succeeded in suppressing his laughter, especially as many of his congregation were on the verge of hysteria. Finding her last appeal useless she quietly walked out and made the best of her way to her village home. The same dog was a thorough little sportswoman, for she had been one of a scratch pack out in India engaged in hunting jackals, and when her longer-legged companions left her in the rear and the last of them had disappeared she would sit up and look round for help in a half-comical, half-pathetic way. She had, too, a wonderful memory, for on a former owner of hers arriving in this country from India after an absence of five years she recognised him immediately with frantic demonstrations of joy."

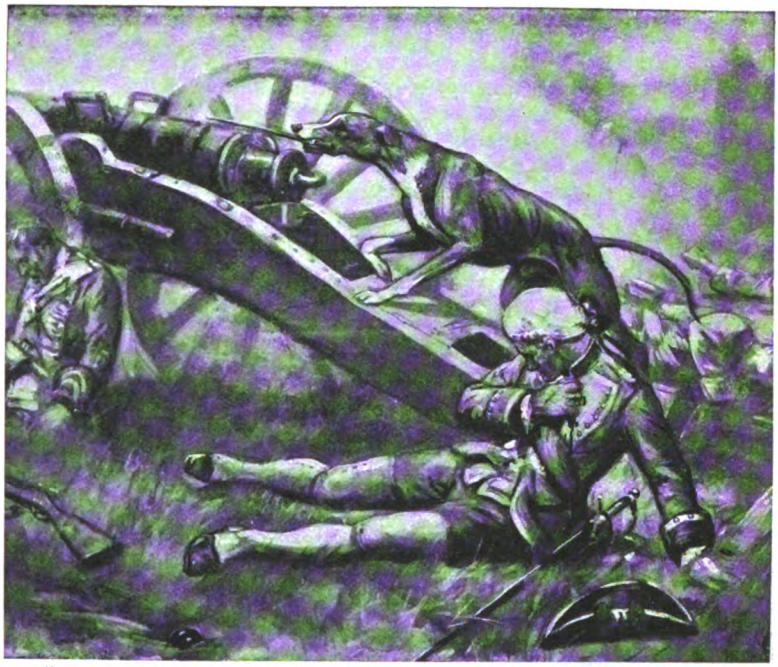
The last of Mrs. Spencer's stories, although perhaps hardly to the point of this article, is so good that we feel obliged to use it :—

"The scene of the following was a town in the Midlands during election time. A lady, accompanied by a very small terrier, was strolling through the town when she came upon a political meeting in full swing. Being an ardent politician she wished to go in, but the dog was the difficulty. However, being a very small animal, she was able to conceal him quite effectually under her cloak, so she entered the hall and took a seat near the door. The Liberal candidate, a stout, florid-looking individual, was addressing the meeting to an accompaniment of cock-crowing, howling, whistling, etc. Suddenly from under the lady's cloak came a succession of sharp yelps, ending in a dismal howl, which completely put in the shade all the previous efforts of the unruly audience. After this display there was much laughter, and when it had subsided and the tormented speaker could gain a hearing he said, 'I have not complained of the cat-calls and other eccentric noises indulged in by some of my hearers, but I do request that the gentleman who has just treated us to such a very bad imitation of the barking of a dog will not interrupt me again.'"

"The most interesting dog story I ever heard," writes Mr. Arthur C. Derwent, "is related of the mother of a French poodle bitch in my possession, Echec by name, and belonging to the late M. Bertrand, the aeronaut. Echec used frequently to be taken up into the car by his master, and probably got to learn a great deal of the mechanism of a balloon. On one occasion Bertrand relates that something went wrong with the rope of the escape-valve. As there was imminent danger of the balloon being drifted out to sea, the moment was most awkward. So high did the car ascend that Bertrand began to lose consciousness and to bleed at the mouth. The concern of the faithful Echec was pitiful to witness. At last, as a *dernier ressort*, the aeronaut hoisted the dog up into the cordage and gasped, hoarsely, 'Pull the rope, Echec.' The intelligent brute fastened his paws into the mullion-like netting and tried to climb. Finding this futile, he must have bitten savagely into the fabric, and so caused an escape of gas. When the outrush overpowered him he probably tried to drop back into the car, but, being unable to disentangle himself, he deliberately thrust himself into the fatal fissure, rather than desert his unconscious master. In this posture he was found by M. Bertrand an hour later, when he came to his senses amidst the branches of a large beech tree in the wood near Calais."

A French work, entitled "L'Histoire des Chiens Célèbres," gives the following incident as well attested: "Mustapha, a strong and active greyhound belonging to a captain of artillery, raised from its birth in the midst of camps, always accompanied his master, and exhibited no alarm even in battle. In the hottest engagements it remained near the cannon, and carried the match in its mouth. At the memorable Battle of Fontenoy Mustapha's master, the captain of artillery, received a mortal wound. About to fire on the enemy, he and several of his corps were at that instant struck down to the earth by a furious firing, when the dog, seeing his master bleeding on the ground, became desperate and howled piteously. Nor did he merely give way to unavailing grief, for a body of French soldiers were now advancing to gain possession of the piece of ordnance, which was aimed at them from the top of a rising ground, when Mustapha, as if he would revenge his master's death, seized the lighted match with his jaws and fired the cannon, loaded with case-shot. Seventy men fell on the spot and the remainder took to flight. After this bold and extraordinary stroke the dog crouched down sadly near the dead body of his beloved master, tenderly licked his wounds, remained with the corpse without any sustenance for twenty-two hours, and was even removed with great difficulty by

some of the comrades of the deceased. This gallant greyhound was taken to London and presented to the King, George II., who ordered it to be taken care of as a grave and faithful public servant."



"MUSTAPHA SEIZED THE LIGHTED MATCH WITH HIS JAWS AND FIRED THE CANNON."

We can hardly attribute to the dog a human understanding, yet the following story proves beyond any doubt that a dog really does understand what is said to it — and there have been too many cases of a similar kind to call the story a coincidence.

"Some years ago," writes Miss Sopha Caulfield, "an event occurred in a country parsonage where I visited, my hostess being a member of my own family, and her brother and husband the chief personages concerned. The brother was a witness of the circumstances that took place. Coming home, gun in hand, from a brief shooting expedition, they were met at the gate by an old and once valuable retriever. She had been very handsome; had long black curly hair and a distinguished pedigree, but now she was very feeble and ailing and scarcely able to walk.

"'Poor old Riga! How wretched you look! The kindest thing I could do would be to shoot you,' said her master. 'But I haven't the heart to do it. You had better go and drown yourself.'

"The dog had been looking up wistfully at him as he spoke to her, silent and sorrowful; and the two men went in and forgot the incident. But at night, according to his custom, the master inquired of the servant whether the two dogs (mother and son) were in. 'No, sir,' was the answer. 'Scot is in, but not Riga.'

"'Have you made a search for her?'

"'Yes, sir. I've called and searched; and it's too dark to look any more.'

"'Then look well the first thing in the morning.'

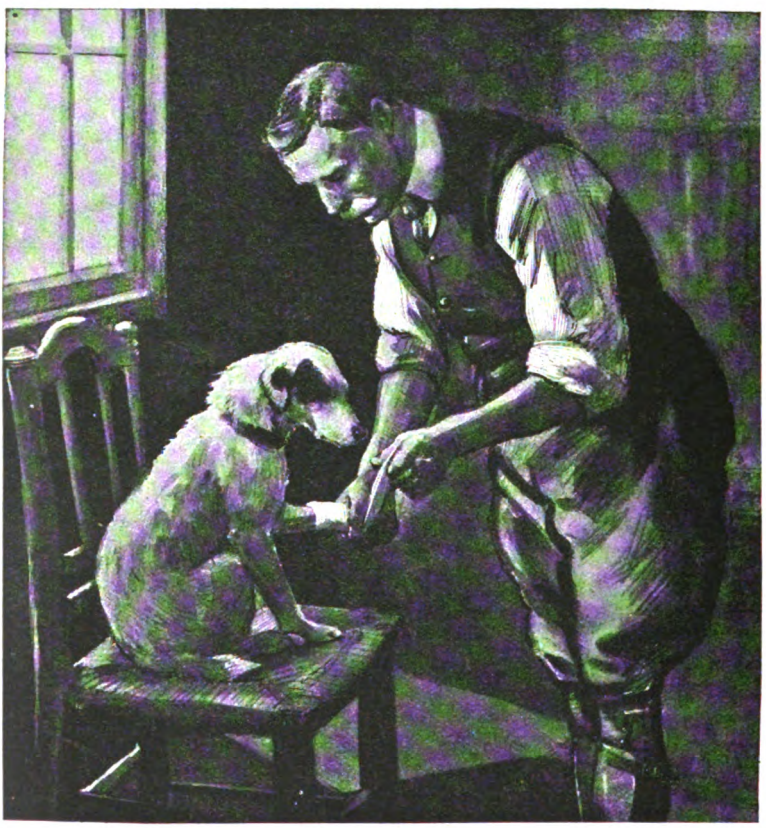
"Before breakfast the next day the three men were searching the grounds, when a shout was heard from the kitchen-garden.

"'Oh, sir, come here. I've found her.'

"A bush or two and a railing with a gate divided the lawn from a pond in the kitchen-garden, and hastening through a strange spectacle met their view. There, standing up straight in the water—in which the body was scarcely immersed—was old Riga, deliberately holding her nose under the surface and now stark and stiff. Had she fallen in the body would have floated up; but she neither fell in nor floated. And the act, viewed in connection with her master's admonition, seems to be beyond all explanation."

A well-known veterinary surgeon, who does not wish his name published, writes: "You ask me for what I consider to be the most notable and authentic instance of canine intelligence that has come under my observation. The following case is absolute truth, and occurred shortly after I purchased my present practice. The former owner of the practice was acting as my assistant at the time. One day in May, 1905, my assistant and I were both in the infirmary yard, when a strange dog came limping in on three legs; the fourth was hanging. He was of the fox-terrier type, but by no means a beauty. He was quite alone and unattended. I caught the dog, and found that he had a

bad comminuted fracture of the left fore leg. I suggested that we should set it, but my assistant said it was some trick on someone's part to get his canine surgery done on the cheap, and drove the dog away. We had neither of us ever seen the dog before, and are certain he had never previously been treated in the infirmary. Next day, when I opened my surgery door, the dog was sitting on the step, holding his paw up most pitifully, and my foreman smith says that when he opened the yard gates before 6 a.m. he was waiting outside quite by himself, and as soon as he opened the gate he ran in and took up his position on the surgery steps and would not move. This time my assistant was not in the yard, and I did what I would probably have done the previous day had he not been present. I dressed his wounds and set the leg, put it in splints, and bandaged it up, the dog sitting on a chair with no one holding him and without making a sound. As soon as I had finished—and it took some time—I gave him a drink of milk and some meat, and he went away on his own accord. I have never seen him since, nor did I ever hear to whom he belonged; but from his look and condition I would say he belonged to poor people. It seems incredible that a dog should have known where to come when he had certainly never been on the premises before, as he was only a young dog. Could he have read the name-plate?"



"I DRESSED HIS WOUNDS AND SET THE LEG."

Mr. T. C. Bridges writes: "The wages of a watchman employed to guard the premises during the week-end form quite a heavy item in the expenses of most firms. The enterprising proprietor of a City business has got over this difficulty by employing a four-footed watchman in the shape of a large dog. One of the old-fashioned telephones which does not require that the receiver should be taken off the holder has been fitted up in the shop, and Tim, as the dog is called, has been trained to bark a reply whenever his master calls him up. Every week, from Saturday to Monday, Tim keeps watch and ward, and whenever called by name answers 'All's Well' with three short, sharp barks.

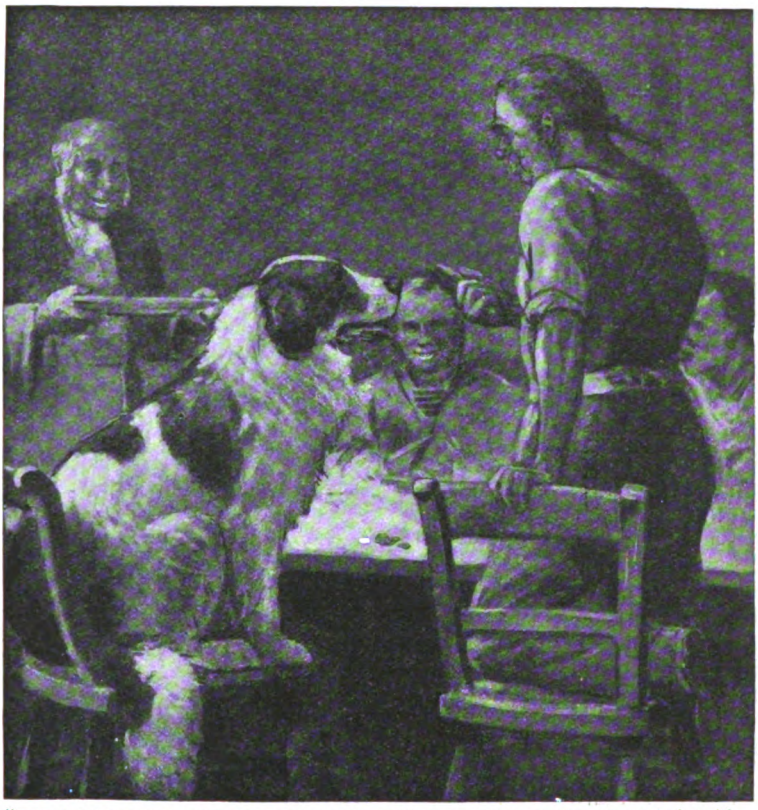
"There are many stories," continues Mr. Bridges, "of dogs which have been trained to carry money to a shop and there purchase buns and other delicacies. A man named Marston, living at Atlanta, Georgia, had taught a collie this trick. One day, having no small change, he gave the dog a written order on the shopkeeper for his usual sweet biscuit, and finding this convenient did the same on several occasions. Some time afterwards the grocer was much surprised when the dog's

master came in and complained that he had been charged for a good many more biscuits than he had ordered. There was quite a dispute over it, when just at that moment the dog came in with a piece of paper in his mouth.

"'It's your dog that has all these biscuits,' said the grocer.

"'But I never gave him an order to-day,' replied Mr. Marston, puzzled.

"The grocer took the piece of paper and looked at it. It was blank. Further investigation showed that, whenever the dog had felt that he would like a biscuit, he had taken a piece of paper to the grocer. The latter, accustomed to the orders, had never noticed that the sheets were blank."



"THE COPPER AND A SILVER SIXPENCE HE INSISTED ON LEAVING AS THE WAITER'S 'TIP.'"

There was a Newfoundland dog on board H.M.S. *Bellona*, which kept on deck during the Battle of Copenhagen, running backward and forward with such courage and anger that he became a greater favourite with the men than ever. When the ship was paid off, after the Peace of Amiens, the sailors had a parting dinner on shore. Victor was placed in the chair and fed with roast beef and plum-pudding, and the bill was made out in Victor's name. To further carry out the joke three sovereigns were placed in front of Victor and the waiter ordered to give change. He did so, the dog wagging his tail benevolently the while. A small pile of copper and silver being deposited by the waiter, he was about to depart, when Victor was told to take up the money in his mouth and carry it to the captain. He did so, but could not be induced to touch the copper and a silver sixpence, which, amid roars of laughter, he insisted on leaving as the waiter's "tip," as he had been accustomed to see the captain do on many previous occasions.

In conclusion, it will be seen that the most astonishing intelligence is attributed to the dog. How far all anecdotes of canine sagacity are credible must be left for others to determine. We know how prone many fond masters are to partiality and exaggeration in speaking of their four-footed friends, and perhaps nothing short of an official report from a Society for the Investigation of Canine Anecdotes would serve to overcome the scruples of the incredulous.

Some Further Experiences of an Irish R.M.

By E. Œ. SOMERVILLE and MARTIN ROSS.

VI.

I WAS labouring in the slough of Christmas letters and bills when my wife came in and asked me if I would take her to the workhouse.

"My dear," I replied, ponderously, but, I think, excusably, "you have, as usual, anticipated my intention, but I think we can hold out until after Christmas."

Philippa declined to pay the jest the respect to which its age entitled it, and replied inconsequently that I knew perfectly well that she could not drive the outside car with the children and the Christmas-tree. I assented that they would make an awkward team, and offered as a substitute for my services those of Denis, the stop-gap.

Those who live in Ireland best know the staying powers of stop-gaps. Denis, uncle of Michael Leary the whip, had been imported into the kennels during my ministry to bridge a hiatus in the long dynasty of the kennel-boys, and had remained for eighteen months, a notable instance of the survival of what might primarily have been considered the unfittest. That Denis should so long have endured his nephew's rule was due not so much to the tie of blood as to the privileged irresponsibility of a stop-gap. Nothing was expected of him, and he pursued an unmolested course until the return of Flurry Knox from South Africa changed the general conditions. He then remained submerged until he drifted into the gap formed in my own establishment by Mr. Peter Cadogan's elopement.

"MY WIFE CAME IN AND ASKED ME IF I WOULD TAKE HER TO THE WORKHOUSE."

Philippa's workhouse-tea took place on Christmas Eve; we were still hurrying through an early luncheon when the nodding crest of the Christmas-tree passed the dining-room windows. My youngest son immediately upset his pudding into his lap; and Philippa hustled forth to put on her hat, an operation which, like the making of an omelette, can apparently only be successfully performed at the last moment. With feelings of mingled apprehension and relief I saw the party drive from the door, the Christmas-tree seated on one side of the car, Philippa on the other, clutching her offspring; Denis on the box, embosomed like a wood-pigeon in the boughs of the spruce-fir. I congratulated myself that the Quaker, now white with the snows of many winters, was in the shafts. Had I not been too deeply engaged in so arranging the rug that it should not trail in the mud all the way to Skebawn, I might have noticed that the lamps had been forgotten.

It was, as I have said, Christmas Eve, and as the afternoon wore on I began to reflect upon what the road from Skebawn would be in another hour—full of drunken people, and, what was worse, of carts steered by drunken people. I had assured Philippa (with what I believe she describes as masculine *esprit de corps*) of Denis's adequacy as a driver, but that did not alter the fact that in the last

rays of the setting sun I got out my bicycle and set forth for the workhouse. When I reached the town it was dark, but the Christmas shoppers showed no tendency to curtail their operations on that account, and the streets were filled with an intricate and variously moving tide of people and carts. The paraffin lamps in the shops did their best, behind bunches of holly, oranges, and monstrous Christmas candles, and partially illumined the press of dark-cloaked women, and more or less drunken men, who swayed and shoved and held vast conversations on the narrow pavements. The red glare of the chemist's globe transformed the leading female beggar of the town into a being from the Brocken; her usual Christmas family, contributed for the festival by the neighbours, as to a Christmas number, being grouped in fortunate ghastliness in the green light. She extracted from me her recognised tribute, and pursued by her assurance that she would forgive me now till Easter (*i.e.*, that further alms would not be exacted for at least a fortnight), I made my way onwards into the outer darkness, beyond the uttermost link in the chain of public-houses.

"THE STREETS WERE FILLED WITH AN INTRICATE AND VARIOUSLY MOVING TIDE OF PEOPLE AND CARTS."

The road that led to the workhouse led also to the railway station. A quarter of a mile away the green light of a signal-post stood high in the darkness, like an emerald. As I neared the workhouse I recognised the deliberate footfall of the Quaker, and presently his long, pale face entered the circle illuminated by my bicycle-lamp. My family were not at all moved by my solicitude for their safety, but, being in want of an audience, were pleased to suggest that I should drive home with them. The road was disgustingly muddy; I tied my bicycle to the back of the car with the rope that is found in the wells of all outside cars. It was not till I had put out the bicycle-lamp that I noticed that the car-lamps had been forgotten, but Denis, true to the convention of his tribe, asseverated that he could see better without lights. I took the place vacated by the Christmas-tree, the Quaker pounded on at his usual stone-breaking trot, and my offspring, in strenuous and entangled duet, declaimed to me the events of the afternoon.

It was without voice or warning that a row of men was materialized out of the darkness, under the Quaker's nose; they fell away to right and left, but one, as if stupefied, held on his way in the middle of the road. It is not easy to divert the Quaker from his course; we swung to the right, but the wing of the car on my side struck the man full in the chest. He fell as instantly and solidly as if he were made of stone, and, like a stone, he lay in the mud. Loud and inebriate howls rose from the others, and as if in answer came a long and distant shriek from an incoming train. Upon this, without bestowing an instant's further heed to their fallen comrade, the party took to their heels and ran to the station. It was all done in a dozen seconds; by the time the Quaker was pulled up we were alone with our victim, and Denis was hoarsely suggesting to me that it would be better to drive away at once. I have often since then regretted that I did not take his advice.

The victim was a very small man; Denis and I dragged him to the side of the road.

He was of an alarming limpness, but there was something reassuring in the reek of whisky that arose as I leaned over him, trying to diagnose his injuries by the aid of a succession of lighted matches. His head lay crookedly on his chest; he breathed heavily but peacefully, and his limbs seemed uninjured. Denis, at my elbow, did not cease to assure me, tremulously, that there was nothing ailed the man, that he was a stranger, and that it would be as good for us to go home. Philippa, on the car, strove as best she might with the unappeasable curiosity of her sons and with the pig-headed anxiety of the Quaker to get home to his dinner. At this juncture a voice, fifty yards away in the darkness, uplifted itself in song.

"Heaven's refle-hex! Killa-ar-ney!" it bawled, hideously.

It fell as balm upon my ear, in its assurance of the proximity of Slipper.

"Sure I know the man well," he said,

"'SURE, I KNOW THE MAN WELL,' HE SAID."

inspecting him by the light of the bicycle-lamp. "Wake up, me *bouchaleen!*" He shook him unmercifully. "Open your eyes, darlin'!"

The invalid here showed signs of animation by uttering an incoherent but, as it seemed, a threatening roar. It lifted Denis as a feather is lifted by a wind, and wafted him to the Quaker's head, where he remained in strict attention to his duties. It also lifted Philippa.

"Is he very bad, do you think?" she murmured at my elbow. "Shall I drive for the doctor?"

"Arrah, what docthor?" said Slipper, magnificently. "Give me a half a crown, Major, and I'll get him what meddyceen will answer him as good as any docthor! Lave him to me!" He shook him again. "I'll regulate him!"

The victim here sat up and shouted something about going home. He was undoubtedly very drunk. It seemed to me that Slipper's ministrations would be more suitable to the situation than mine—certainly than Philippa's. I administered the solatium; then I placed Denis on the box of the car with the bicycle-lamp in his hand, and drove my family home.

After church next day we met Flurry Knox. He approached us with the green glint in his eye that told that game was on foot, whatever that game might be.

"Who bailed you out, Mrs. Yeates?" he said, solicitously. "I hear you and the Major and Denis Leary were all in the lock-up for furious driving and killing a man! I'm told he was anointed last night."

Philippa directed what she believed to be a searching glance at Flurry's face of friendly concern.

"I don't believe a word of it!" she said, dauntlessly, while a very becoming warmth in her complexion betrayed an inward qualm. "Who told you?"

"The servants heard it at first Mass this morning, and Slipper had me late for church telling me about it. The fellow says if he lives he's going to take an action against the Major."

I listened with, I hope, outward serenity. In dealings with Flurry Knox the possibility that he might be speaking the truth could never safely be lost sight of. It was also as well to remember that he generally knew what the truth was.

I said loftily that there had been nothing the matter with the man but Christmas Eve, and inquired if Flurry knew his name and address.

"Of course I do," said Flurry. "He's one of those mountainy men that live up in the hill behind Aussolas. Oweneen the Sprat is the name he goes by, and he's the crossest little thief in the barony. Never mind, Mrs. Yeates; I'll see you get fair play in the dock!"

"How silly you are!" said Philippa. But I could see that she was shaken.

What Flurry's servants may have heard at first Mass was apparently equalled, if not excelled, by what Denis heard at second. He asked me next morning, with a gallant attempt at indifference, if I had had any word of "the Man-een"

"'Twas what the people were saying on the roads last night that he could have the law of us, and there was more was saying that he'd never do a day's good. Sure they say the backbone is cracked where the wheel of the car went over him! But didn't yourself and the misthress swear black and blue that the wheel never went next or nigh him? And didn't Michael say that there wasn't a Christmas this ten years that that one hadn't a head on him the size of a bullawawn with the len'th o' dhrink?"

In spite of the contributory negligence that might be assumed in the case of anyone with this singular infirmity, I was not without a secret uneasiness.

Two days afterwards I received a letter, written on copybook paper in a clerkly hand. It had the Aussolas postmark, in addition to the imprint of various thumbs, and set forth the injuries inflicted by me and my driver on Owen Twohig on Christmas Eve, and finally it demanded a compensation of twenty pounds for the same. Failing this satisfaction the law was threatened, but a hope was finally expressed that the honourable gentleman would not see a poor man wronged. It was, in fact, the familiar mixture of bluff and whine, and, as I said to Philippa, the Man-een—under which title he had passed into the domestic vocabulary—had, of course, got hold of a letter-writer to do the trick for him.

In the next day or so I met Flurry twice. I found him so rationally interested, and even concerned, about fresh versions of the accident that had cropped up, that I was moved to tell him of the incident of the letter. He looked serious, and said he would go up himself to see what was wrong with Oweneen. He advised me to keep out of it for the present, as they might open their mouths too big.

The moon was high as I returned from this interview; when I wheeled my bicycle into the yard I found that the coach-house in which I was wont to stable it was locked; so also was the harness-room. Attempting to enter the house by the kitchen door, I found it also was locked; a gabble of conversation prevailed within, and, with the mounting indignation of one who hears but cannot make himself heard, I banged ferociously on the door. Silence fell, and Mrs. Cadogan's voice implored Heaven's protection.

"Open the door!" I roared.

A windlike rush of petticoats followed, through which came sibilantly the words:—

"A WINDLIKE RUSH OF PETTICOATS FOLLOWED."

"Glory be to goodness! 'Tis the masther:"

The door opened—I found myself facing the entire strength of my establishment, including Denis, and augmented by Slipper.

"They told me you were asking afther me, Major," began Slipper, descending respectfully from the kitchen table, on which he had been seated.

I noticed that Mrs. Cadogan was ostentatiously holding her heart, and that Denis was shaking like the conventional aspen.

"What's all this about?" said I, looking round upon them. "Why is the whole place locked up?"

"It was a little unaisy they were," said Slipper, snatching the explanation from Mrs. Cadogan with the determination of the

skilled leader of conversation. "I was telling them I seen two men below in the plantation, like they'd be watching out for someone, and poor Mr. Leary here got a reeling in his head after I telling it."

"Indeed the crayture was as white now, as white as a masheroon!" broke in Mrs. Cadogan, "and we dhrew him in here to the fire till your honour came home."

"Nonsense!" I said, angrily; "a couple of boys poaching rabbits! Upon my word, Slipper, you have very little to do, coming here and frightening people for nothing."

"What did I say?" demanded Slipper, dramatically facing his audience; "only that I seen two men in the plantation. How would I know what business they had in it?"

"Ye said ye heard them whishling to each other like curlews through the wood," faltered Denis, "and, sure, that's the whishle them Twohigs has always——"

"Maybe it's whistling to the girls they were!" suggested Slipper, with an unabashed eye at Hannah.

I told him to come up with me to my office, and stalked from the kitchen, full of the comfortless wrath that has failed to find a suitable victim.

The interview in the office did not last long, nor was it in any way reassuring. Slipper, with the manner of the confederate who had waded shoulder to shoulder with me through gore, could only tell me that, though he believed that there was nothing ailed the Man-een, he wouldn't say but what he might be sevarely hurted That I wasn't gone five minutes before near a score of the Twohigs came leathering down out of the town in two ass-butts (this term indicates donkey-carts of the usual dimensions), and when Oweneen felt them coming he let the most unmarciful screech, upon which Slipper, in just fear of the Twohigs, got over the wall and executed a strategic retreat upon the railway station, leaving the Twohigs to carry away their wounded to the mountains. That for himself he had been going in dread of them ever since, and for no one else in the wide world would he have put a hand to one of them.

I preserved an unshaken front towards Slipper; but something that I justified to myself as a fear of Philippa's insatiable conscientiousness made me resolve that I would, without delay, go "back in the mountain" and interview Oweneen the Sprat.

New Year's Day favoured my purpose, bringing with it clear frost and iron roads, a day when even the misanthropic soul of a bicycle awakens into sympathy and geniality. Finally, however, I had to leave the high road, and the mountain lane that ensued restored to me the judicial frame of mind. In the first twenty yards my bicycle was transformed from a swallow to a pig-headed and semi-paralyzed wheelbarrow, struggling in a species of dry watercourse.

A family of goats, regarding me from a rocky mound, was the first hint of civilization. The *bohireen* dropped, with a sudden twist to the right, and revealed a fold in the hillside, containing a half-dozen or so of little fields, crooked and heavily walled, and nearly as many thatched cabins, flung about in the hollows as indiscriminately as the boulders upon the wastes outside. A group of children rose in front of me like a flock of starlings, and scudded with bare-footed nimbleness to the shelter of the houses, in a pattering, fluttering stampede. I descended upon the nearest cabin of the colony. The door was shut; a heavy padlock linking two staples said "Not at home," and the nose of a dog showed in a hole above the sill, sniffing deeply and suspiciously. I remembered that the first of January was a holyday, and that every man in the colony had doubtless betaken himself to the nearest public-house. The next cottage was some fifty yards away, and the faces of a couple of children peered at me round the corner of it As I approached they vanished, but the door of the cabin was open, and blue turf smoke breathed placidly outwards from it. The merciful frost had glazed the inevitable dirty pool in front of the door, and had made practicable the path beside it. I propped my bicycle against a rock, and projected into the dark interior an inquiry as to whether there was anyone in.

I had to repeat it twice before a small old woman with white hair and a lemon-coloured face appeared; I asked her if she could tell me where Owen Twohig lived.

"Your honour's welcome," she replied, tying the strings of her cap under her chin with wiry fingers, and eyeing me with concentrated shrewdness. I repeated the question.

She responded by begging me to come in and rest myself, for this was a cross place and a backwards place, and I should be famished with the cold. "Sure them little wheels dhraws the wind."

I ignored this peculiarity of bicycles, and, not without exasperation, again asked for Owen Twohig.

"Are you Major Yeates, I beg your pardon?" I assented to what she knew as well as I did. "Why, then, 'tis here he lives

indeed, in this little house, and a poor place he have to live in. Sure he's my son, the crayture "—her voice at once ascended to the key of lamentation; "faith, he didn't rise till to-day. Since Christmas Eve I didn't quinch light in the house with him stretched in the bed always, and not a bit passed his lips night or day only one suppeen of whisky in its purity. Ye'd think the tongue would light out of his mouth with the heat, and ye'd see the blaze of darkness in his face! I hadn't as much life in me this morning as that I could wash my face."

I replied that I wanted to speak to her son, and was in a hurry.

"He's not within, asthore, he's not within at all. He got the lend of a little donkey, and he went back the mountain to the bone-setter, to try could he straighten the leg with him."

"Did Dr. Hickey see him?" I demanded.

"Sure a wise woman came in from Finnaun a' Stephen's Day," pursued Mrs. Twohig, swiftly, "and she bet three spits down on him, and she said it's what ailed him he had the Fallen Palate, with the dint o' the blow the car bet him in the poll, and that anyone that have the Fallen Palate might be speechless for three months with it. She took three ribs of his hair then, and she was pulling them till she was in a passpiration, and in the latther end she pulled up the palate." She paused and wiped her eyes with her apron. "But the leg is what has him destroyed altogether; she told us we should keep sheep's butter rubbed to it in the place where the thrack o' the wheel is down in it——"

The blush of a frosty sunset was already in the sky, and the children who had fled before me had returned, reinforced by many others, to cluster in a whispering swarm round my bicycle, and to group themselves attentively in the rear of the conversation.

"Look here, Mrs. Twohig," I said, not as yet angry, but in useful proximity to it, "I've had a letter from your son, and he and his friends have been trying to frighten my man, Denis Leary; he can come down and see me if he has anything to say, but you can tell him from me that I'm not going to stand this sort of thing!"

If the widow Twohig had been voluble before, this pronouncement had the effect of bringing her down in spate. She instantly, and at the top of her voice, called Heaven to witness her innocence and the innocence of her "little boy." Still at full cry, she sketched her blameless career, and the unmerited suffering that had ever pursued her and hers; how, during the past thirty years, she had been drooping over her little orphans, and how Oweneen, that was the only one she had left to do a hand's turn for her, would be "under clutches" the longest day that he'd live. It was at about this point that I gave her five shillings. It was a thoroughly illogical act, but at the moment it seemed inevitable, and Mrs. Twohig was good enough to accept it in the same spirit. I told her that I would send Dr. Hickey to see her son (which had, it struck me, a somewhat stemming effect upon her eloquence), and I withdrew, still in magisterial displeasure. I must have been half-way down the lane before it was revealed to me that a future on crutches was what Mrs. Twohig anticipated for her son.

"THE CHILDREN WHO HAD FLED BEFORE ME HAD RETURNED, REINFORCED BY MANY OTHERS, TO CLUSTER IN A WHISPERING SWARM ROUND MY BICYCLE."

By that night's post I wrote to Hickey a strictly impartial letter, stating the position, and asking him to see Owen Twohig and to let me have his professional opinion upon him. Philippa added a postscript, asking for a nerve-tonic for the parlourmaid, a Dublin

girl, who, since the affair of the curlews in the plantation, had lost all colour and appetite, and persisted in locking the hall door day and night, to the infinite annoyance of the dogs.

Next morning, while hurrying through an early breakfast preparatory to starting for a distant Petty Sessions, I was told that Denis wished to speak to me at the hall door. This, as I before have had occasion to point out, boded affairs of the first importance. I proceeded to the hall door, and there found Denis, pale as the Lily Maid of Astolat, with three small fishes in his hand.

"'THIM'S NO JOKE, SIR,' REPLIED DENNIS, PORTENTOUSLY. 'THIM'S SPRATS!'"

"There was one of thim before me in my bed last night," he said, in a hoarse and shaken whisper, "and there was one in the windy in the harness-room down on top o' me razor, and there was another nelt to the stable door with the nail of a horse's shoe."

I made the natural suggestion that someone had done it for a joke.

"Thim's no joke, sir," replied Denis, portentously. "Thim's sprats!"

"Well, I'm quite aware of that," I said, unmoved by what appeared to be the crushing significance of the statement.

"Oweneen the *Sprat!*" murmured Philippa, illuminatingly, emerging from the dining-room door with her cup of tea in her hand. "It's Hannah, trying to frighten him!"

Hannah, the housemaid, was known to be the humorist of the household.

"He have a brother a smith, back in the mountain," continued Denis, wrapping up the sprats and the nail in his handkerchief. "'Twas for a token he put the nail in it. If he dhraws them mountainy men down on me, I may as well go under the sod. It isn't yourself or the misthress they'll folly; it's myself." He crept down the steps as deplorably as the Jackdaw of Rheims. "And it's what Michael's after telling me, they have it all through the country that I said you should throw Twohig in the ditch, and it was good enough for the likes of him; and I said to Michael 'twas a lie for them, and that we cared him as tender as if he was our mother itself, and we'd have given the night to him only for the misthress that was roaring on the car, and no blame to her; sure the world knows the mother o' children has no courage!"

This drastic generality was unfortunately lost to my wife, as she had retired to hold a court of inquiry in the kitchen.

The inquiry elicited nothing beyond the fact that since Christmas Day Denis was "using no food," and that the kitchen, so far from indulging in practical jokes at his expense, had been instant throughout in sympathy, and in cups of strong tea, administered for the fortification of the nerves. All were obviously deeply moved by the incident of the sprats, the parlourmaid, indeed, having already locked herself into the pantry, through the door of which, on Philippa's approach, she gave warning hysterically.

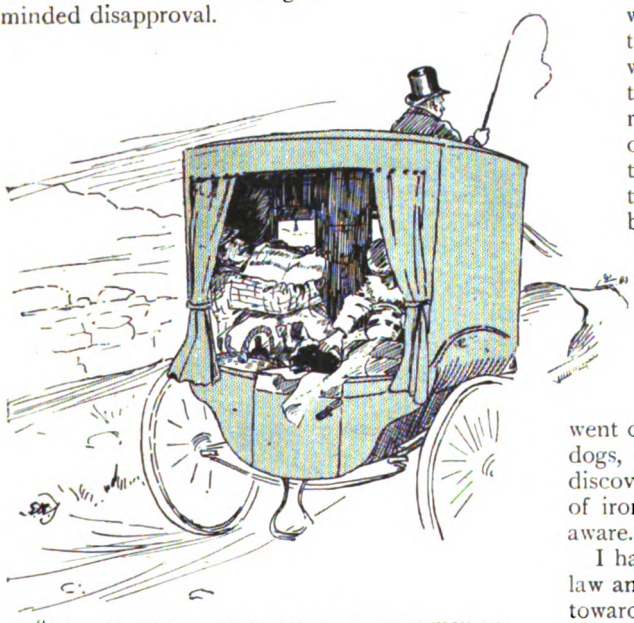
The matter remained unexplained, and was not altogether to my liking. As I drove down the avenue and saw Denis carefully close the yard gates after me I determined that I would give Murray, the District Inspector of Police, a brief sketch of the state of affairs. I did not meet Murray, but, as it happened, this made no difference. Things were already advancing smoothly and inexorably towards their preordained conclusion.

I have since heard that none of the servants went to bed that night. They, including Denis, sat in the kitchen with locked doors, drinking tea and reciting religious exercises; Maria, as a further precaution, being chained to the leg of the table. Their fears were in no degree allayed by the fact that nothing whatever occurred, and the most immediate result of the vigil was that my bath next morning boiled as it stood in the can, and dimmed the room with clouds of steam; a circumstance sufficiently rare in itself, and absolutely without precedent on Sunday morning. The next feature of the case was a letter at breakfast-time from a gentleman signing himself "Jas. Fitzmaurice." He said that, Dr. Hickey having gone away for a fortnight's holiday, he, Fitzmaurice, was acting as his locum tenens. In that capacity he had opened my letter, and would go and see Twohig as soon as possible. He enclosed prescription for tonic as requested.

It was a threatening morning, and we did not go to church. I noticed that my wife's housekeeping séance was unusually prolonged, and even while I smoked and read the papers I was travelling in my meditations to the point of determining that I would have a talk with the priest about all this infernal nonsense. When Philippa at length rejoined me I found that she also had arrived at a conclusion, impelled thereto by the counsels of Mrs. Cadogan, abetted by her own conscience.

Its result was that immediately after lunch, long before the Sunday roast beef had been slept off, I found myself carting precarious parcels—a jug, a bottle, a pudding dish—to the inside car, in which Philippa had already placed herself with a pair of blankets and various articles culled from my wardrobe—including a pair of boots to which I was sincerely attached. Denis—pale yellow in complexion and shrouded in gloom—was on the box, the Quaker was in the shafts. There was no rain, but the clouds hung black and low.

It was an expedition of purest charity, so Philippa explained to me over again as we drove away. She said nothing of propitiation or diplomacy. For my part I said nothing at all, but I reflected on the peculiar gifts of the parlourmaid in valeting me, and decided that it might be better to allow Philippa to run the show on her own lines, while I maintained an attitude of large-minded disapproval.



"A SOURER LADY BOUNTIFUL NEVER SET FORTH UPON AN ERRAND OF MERCY."

The blankets took up as much room in the car as a man; I had to hold in my left hand a jug of partly-jellified beef tea. A sourer Lady Bountiful never set forth upon an errand of mercy. To complete establishment—in the words of the *Gazette*—Maria and Minx, on the floor of the car, wrought and strove in ceaseless and objectless agitation, an infliction due to the ferocity of a female rival, who terrorized the high road within hail of my gates. I thanked Heaven that I had at least been firm about not taking the children; for the dogs, at all events, the moment of summary ejectment would arrive sooner or later.

Seven miles in an inside car are seven miles indeed. The hills that had run to meet my bicycle and glided away behind it now sat in their places to be crawled up and lumbered down at such a pace as seemed good to the Quaker, whose appetite for the expedition was, if possible, less than that of his driver. Appetite was, indeed, the last thing suggested by the aspect of Denis. His drooping shoulders and deplorable countenance proclaimed apology and depreciation to the mountain tops, and more especially to the mountainy men. Looking back on it now, I recognise the greatness of the tribute to my valour and omnipotence that he should have consented thus to drive us into the heart of the enemy's country.

A steep slope, ending with a sharp turn through a cutting, reminded me that we were near the mountain *bohireen* that was our goal. I got out and walked up the hill stiffly, because the cramp of the covered car was in my legs. Stiff though I was, I had outpaced the Quaker, and was near the top of the hill when something that was apparently a brown croquet-ball rolled swiftly round the bend above me, charged into the rock wall of the cutting with a clang, and came on down the hill with a weight and venom unknown to croquet-balls. It sped past me, missed the Quaker by an uncommonly near shave, and went on its way, hotly pursued by the two dogs, who, in the next twenty yards, discovered with horror that it was made of iron, a fact of which I was already aware.

I have always been as lenient as the law and other circumstances would allow towards the illegal game of "bowling." It consists in bowling an iron ball along

a road, the object being to cover the greatest possible distance in a given number of bowls. It demands considerable strength and skill, and it is played with a zest much enhanced by its illegality and by its facilities as a medium for betting. The law forbids it on account of its danger to the unsuspecting wayfarer, in consideration of which a scout is usually posted ahead to signal the approach of the police and to give warning to passers-by. The mountainy men, trusting to their isolation, had neglected this precaution, with results that came near being serious to the Quaker, and filled with wrath, both personal and official, I took the hill at a vengeful run, so as to catch the bowler red-handed. At the turn in the cutting I met him face to face. As a matter of fact he nearly ran into my arms, and the yelp of agony with which he dodged my impending embrace is one of the few consolations that I have gathered from the whole affair. He was a very small man; he doubled like a rabbit, and bolted back towards a swarm of men who were following the fortunes of the game. He flitted over the wall by the roadside, and was away over the rocky hillside at a speed that even in my best days would have left me nowhere.

"IT WENT ON ITS WAY, HOTLY PURSUED BY THE TWO DOGS."

The swarm on the road melted; a good part of it was quietly absorbed by the lane up which I had dragged my bicycle two days before; the remainder, elaborately uninterested and respectable, in their dark blue Sunday clothes, strolled gravely in the opposite direction. A man on a bicycle met them, and dismounted to speak to the leaders. I wondered if he were a policeman in plain clothes on the prowl. He came on to meet me, leading his bicycle, and I perceived that a small black leather bag was strapped to the carrier. He was young and, apparently, very hot.

"I beg your pardon," he said, in the accents of Dublin. "I understand you're Major Yeates. I'm Dr. Hickey's 'locum,' and I've come out to see the man you wrote to me about. From what you said I thought it better to lose no time."

I was rather out of breath, but I expressed my sense of indebtedness to him.

"I think there must be some mistake," went on the "locum." "I've just asked these men on the road where Owen Twohig lives, and one of them—the fellow they call Slipper, or some such name—said Owen Twohig was the little chap that's just after sprinting up the mountain. He seemed to think it was a great joke—I suppose you're sure Owen was the name?"

"Perfectly sure," I said, heavily.

The eyes of Dr. Fitzmaurice had travelled past me, and were regarding with professional alertness something farther down the road. I followed their direction dreamily, because in spirit I was far away, tracking Flurry Knox through deep places.

"'HE KNOWS WHAT'S WHAT!' SAID THE 'LOCUM.'"

On the hither side of the rock cutting the covered car had come to a standstill. The reins had fallen from Denis's hands; he was obviously having the "wakeness" appropriate to the crisis. Philippa, on the step below him, was proffering to him the jug of beef tea and the bottle of port. He accepted the latter.

"He knows what's what!" said the "locum."

How I Went Round the Equator.

By LAURIDS PETERSON.

[The following remarkable article has been written exclusively for "The Strand Magazine" by the first man in the history of the world to encircle the globe around the equinoctial line. Mr. Laurids Peterson is an adventurous Dane, mariner, merchant, and missionary, forty-three years of age, who has, so to speak, made the Equator his hobby.]

MR. L. PETERSON.
From a Photograph.

AS a boy in my native Copenhagen the Equator had no more attraction for me than it probably has for most boys. I was taught at school that it was an imaginary line encircling the earth, and that sailors, when crossing this imaginary line, were supposed to receive a visit from Father Neptune. Little did I then dream that I was destined to know more about the Equator than anybody else in the world, for this is what I think I may safely say of myself at the present day. For I have done what, so far as I can discover, no one else has done—I have travelled round the globe on the equinoctial line, with a comparatively small deviation on the West Coast of Africa, which it is my determination, if health and strength are granted to me, yet to accomplish.

At the age of seventeen I left my work in a Copenhagen surveyor's office and went to Bremen, where I made several voyages as supercargo and once as second steward on a Baltic steamer. I soon longed for travel and adventure, and in 1889 came my first experience of the Equator, when I was on my way to Batavia, in the Island of Java, in the service of a shipping company. I was four years in that service, the last year being spent as storekeeper and assistant surveyor at Padang.

A few miles north of Fort de Kock, where there is a line of railway, rises the great mountain of Ophir, nine thousand six hundred feet, whose slopes are almost exactly on the Equator. At Padang I had made the acquaintance of a German missionary who had been labouring amongst the Battaks. One day, as we had driven out to the mountain, Father Bruns said to me, "Do you know, my friend, that the spot you are standing on is, as nearly as it is possible to calculate, a very famous spot?" "Truly," I exclaimed, for I knew he was a great authority on the history of the island. "What has happened here?" He looked grave and answered: "Nothing—everything. You are standing on part of the Equator. You are exactly halfway between the Poles. When you stretch your legs apart, your right leg is in the Northern Hemisphere and your left leg is in the Southern. After all," he went on, "the Equator only exists in our minds. It is only

"YOU ARE STANDING ON THE EQUATOR. YOUR RIGHT LEG IS IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE AND YOUR LEFT LEG IS IN THE SOUTHERN."
After a Sketch by the Author.

a symbol. We cannot touch it or see it. We cannot remove it or injure it in any way. But it is there all the same, and from it the whole world dates its latitudes, without which ships would be lost and boundaries would fall into confusion."

I was very much struck with this way of regarding the Equator. After a pause Bruns took my arm and said: "If you will come with me a mile or so to the east yonder I will show you something." Accordingly we went on together until we reached a spot covered with dense foliage, and the next moment I saw a large white board on which was painted this legend in French:—

"Ici est l'Equator qu'entour le globe comme l'Evangile de Jésus-Christ." In other words the Equator was with him a figure of speech for the Gospel, and he used it constantly to point a moral.

"I have put up four of these," he told me, smilingly; "you will find another in Dutch seventy miles from here and another in German on one of the Butu Islands." I afterwards saw the latter on a trip to the islands, but the one south of Sulu had been carried away by a native as a curiosity.

It was these conversations with the missionary which led me to embrace Christianity and caused me afterwards to act for seven months in Borneo as colporteur for the Bible Society.

It was in the town of Pontianak, on the Equator, that I witnessed a very elaborate celebration of the Dutch Queen's accession (23rd of November) by the local officials and natives. A more fantastic spectacle I cannot conceive.

There were sixty soldiers mustered at this post, and nearly all of them appeared to be field-marshals, or generals at the least. As for the officers, their display of epaulettes, gold-lace buttons, and embroidery was enough to strike awe into the hearts of the natives. But it was the dusky supernumeraries who caught the eye. One had a magnificent cocked hat with feathers, a resplendent light-blue tunic, and no trousers! Another wore a pair of high cavalry boots, with a scarlet sash bound round his loins.

THE MISSIONARY'S SIGN ON THE EQUATOR.
After a Sketch by the Author

In Pontianak I found, as in other places on the Equator, that the "imaginary line" is held in deep respect, for not only did the Resident in his speech refer several times to little Wilhelmina's sovereignty of this part of the Equator, but in the toasts afterwards the Equator was drunk with enthusiasm, and one subaltern actually undertook to reply in its behalf!

In 1894 I got an offer from the captain of an American trading schooner at Menado to take the post of second mate, and as I was tired of my wandering employ in the Dutch service I accepted, and for the next fifteen months we cruised amongst the islands. At last, when the captain had orders to return to San Francisco for refitting, stopping on the way to obtain supplies and a large American flag for the new American possession of Baker

Island, I realized a chance of seeing more of the Equator than I had ever done before, for Baker Island would bring us into longitude 176deg., and afterwards an opportunity might come to follow the eastern course of the Equator in a ship from Honolulu. But it so happened that our schooner never got to Honolulu; after leaving Baker the captain became seriously ill and died three days out at sea, and the first mate and myself agreed that the condition of the ship and the weather were such as to warrant us in making the nearest port, and we held on until we reached Samoa, and anchored in the harbour of Apia. Here we had to dispose of our cargo for what it would fetch and await instructions from the owners at San Francisco. Meanwhile, the acting captain decamped, the crew—seven men—deserted, and I was left with the schooner on my hands. I passed four months at Apia, and when I finally got instructions to have the *Rogeo* towed to Panama I had a considerable claim against the owners. I now therefore stipulated that I should be paid seven hundred dollars, and that the schooner should stop at the Galapagos Islands and there land me.

In such fashion did I realize my ambition of making a good beginning of a journey round the world by the Equator.

We had a smooth voyage, and the captain of the vessel fulfilled his promise of setting me down on Isabella Island—which I gained in a small boat. I was told that I should have to wait three months before the Panama steamer called at the island. As it turned out, I did not have to wait so long to reach the Equator coast, but I had plenty of time to examine the island and to gratify my passion by many walks on the exact line of the Equator, latitude 0deg. To my astonishment, I found that Señor Arellana, who owns the northern portion of Isabella, asked me if there was "any mention of the Equator in the Protestant Bible." I explained to him that there was not.

"I have never," he said, "been able to find out anything about it from our priests, and I saw nothing for years to make me believe it existed. But one night, señor, three years ago, there was an earthquake on this island, and the next day I observed a great fissure running east and west thirty yards long, and I can tell you, señor, I was dreadfully frightened. I couldn't help going down on my knees and praying, for I really thought the world might be weak in that place, and, if so, it might easily split and fall away into two pieces. Tell me all you know or have heard of the Equator, and how such a line came to be discovered."

Before I left Isabella I reassured him.

But I still had to reach Ecuador, for I was more than five hundred miles from the mainland. This journey I managed in a small sloop, owned by a resident of San Salvador who was going to escort the Governante from Quito. I had no great difficulty in bribing the master to land me anywhere I chose on the coast, and so I chose the small hamlet of Padernales. I set off down the coast and came across a road twenty miles south at right angles with a large cross which had been set up there. At this wayside shrine were two peasants, a man and a woman, labourers in a cocoa plantation. As I paused one of them pointed to the cross and then to the roadway running towards the mountains, and murmured, "El Ecuador" (the Equator). Then they both crossed themselves devoutly and proceeded on their way.

I had bought a donkey, and now proceeded on my way to Quito, the capital of Ecuador. Here I decided to travel in the character of explorer, because I was told that otherwise I should have trouble with the Jesuits. I engaged two hardy guides (Narciso and Manuel) and set off.

A dozen times we pitched our camp for the night exactly on the equinoctial line, according to my reckoning. My equipage comprised two rifles and ammunition, mosquito-netting, and as much jerked beef and cassava bread as we could carry. At night we could hear the howls of wild beasts, and once my feet were attacked by a vampire and I lost a good deal of blood, notwithstanding that I had been told that vampires were a fiction. At the Casiquiare River my guides were to have gone back, but Narciso offered to go on with me across Colombia to San Gabriel, on the Negro River, and I engaged an Indian to take Manuel's place. I reached San Gabriel without mishap, although I once nearly lost my life at the jaws of a cayman.

We had pitched our camp one night without suspecting, all tired out as I was, that we were only a few yards away from a rather wide creek - just the place where caymans would be likely to frequent. It was my guide's fault. So worn-out was I that I dropped off to sleep early. I had got used to the jungle noises, jaguars, goatsuckers, and owls, not to mention at least a million frogs, but even before I was actually asleep I was conscious of a terrible sound—different

NATIVES OF ECUADOR PAYING THEIR DEVOTIONS TO THE EQUATOR.
After a Sketch by the Author.

from the rest—like a sick lion's roar. How long this went on I do not know, but my guide at last woke me up to say he thought a cayman was near. I got up in a panic, lit the torch, and, staggering forward, stumbled into a deep creek. To save myself from falling I threw out my hand—it gripped the slimy, scaly tail of a huge man-eating cayman! With what celerity I scrambled ashore I leave you to imagine!

Sometimes the forest was so dense that we scarcely made ten miles in a hard day, and even the ferns were as tall as many of our trees in Denmark. But I was at last in Brazil and on the upper Negro River, on which steamers, had I wished it, would have borne me to the Amazon and the Atlantic Ocean. But I chose to go on the steamer only as far as Barcellos, after which I made my way, with another Indian, to the hilly country again by donkey-ride and horseback, as well as nearly four hundred miles on foot. I finally reached Macapa, at the mouth of the Amazon. It took me ten months and seven days to cross the Continent, including a week's stay at San Gabriel. The commandante at San Gabriel was very kind, and as cattle and sheep flourish in the vicinity I lived well that week. The whole of the journey eastward is chiefly connected in my mind with fearful howling monkeys, whose clamour nearly drove me out of my wits.

From Para, on the 9th of February, 1904, I at last got passage in a German ship, the *Axel*, going to the German Kamerun, on the West Coast of Africa, with a cargo of Brazilian produce which the Government wished to introduce there. The voyage was very long and tedious, owing to adverse winds. Once we were blown back from the Equator in longitude 31deg., until we were actually within sight of Ascension Island, but the captain got on to his course again, and we finally made the Portuguese island of St. Thomas on the twenty-ninth day out. I fear I had talked so much about the Equator on the voyage that the crew, who were a mixed lot—three of them negroes, two lascars, and our cook a Chinaman—took a dislike to me and regarded me as the Jonah of the ship. Whenever there was a dangerous squall I would hear them saying, "It's that crazy Dane again. I tell you, boys, the Equator don't like it!" They used to think that I was "dogging" the Equator, and that the Equator was retaliating! But the captain was my friend; he was an intelligent man hailing from Hamburg, and much interested in my feat of going round the world by the Equator. After each fresh storm he would say, "Well, Peterson, old Herr Neptune bumped us off again last night." Then he would laugh heartily and add: "But, never fear, we will bump him back!"

As he wanted for some reason or other to avoid the Bight of Biafra he very gladly agreed to land me at St. Thomas, whence I could get a Portuguese or French boat to take me to the coast. I spent eleven days at Rola, which is a deserted hilly island. To my surprise hardly any of the inhabitants seemed to know that their island was on the Equator, and a Portuguese planter said to me, "Very well, señor; and who does the Equator belong to?" I told him it was merely a line going round the earth, and he said, "Oh, then it belongs to England. Then we needn't move, because the Kings of Portugal and England are very good friends."

From St. Anna I got a steamer going across to Libreville, in the French Congo. This time I carried with me a large trunk filled with tracts and Bibles, but the official at Libreville told me with a smile that I should probably have trouble over them if I met any of the priests. He could not understand why I should want to get to Boué overland, as I could easily have gone in a boat up the Ogowe River, and, when I explained, his manner underwent a change and he said: "Ah, I see you are a naturalist and explorer. I have a great respect for naturalists and explorers, but—pardon—have you a permit?' I showed him my papers. "Ah, you are a Dane," he said. "I thought you were a German. My orders concern only Germans." He then volunteered to assist in engaging six bearers for my escort, and in three days I was ready to set out, keeping steadily along the line of the Equator until I reached Boué, where I dismissed my negroes, having resolved to stay here ten days, where there are several courteous French officials and a large number of traders, besides a great native population, to whom I could, by means of my picture-tracts and an interpreter, teach the Word of God. On the day following my arrival I rode out to the Equator and affixed one of the placards I had printed in Para:—

Here is the Equator,
Which, like the Gospel
Of Christ,
Encircles the whole Earth.

At this time I was feeling far from well, and on getting back to my quarters I took an extra dose of quinine and went to bed. I did not rise for eleven days. I am bound to say I was shown every kindness, but I could not shake off the fever. I had written home to have my letters and some money, besides Bibles and merchandise, sent to me at Coquilhatville or Equatorville, on the Congo, between which place and Leopoldville there is a line of steamers. Three times I set out from Boué, and three times I had to return—twice from sickness, and the last because my escort became quarrelsome and mutinied, demanding the whole of their wages in advance. At last, though with great regret, I had to face the inevitable, and that is why the three hundred odd miles between Boué and the River Congo on the Equator is unknown to me, and is the only considerable stretch I have not traversed. But I mean to do even this some day!

Sadly I made my way back to Olambo, where I found a tender ready to take me along to Leopoldville. On April 21st my steamer reached Coquilhatville, on the Equator, and I had before me a long journey of five hundred miles to Stanley Falls. Coquilhatville, formerly called Equatorville, is right on the line, and there are many reminders of the fact, particularly the hotel or auberge, A l'Equateur.

This caravanserai was usually frequented by a motley horde—unparalleled, I should say, on earth. There are Belgians, Frenchmen, Germans, Jews, Hollanders, and Arabs, while the place is surrounded by a squatting multitude of blacks of many tribes, nearly all naked, ready to be engaged as bearers or boatmen or escort, or in any capacity whatever. Human life, I have reason to know, is held cheap at Equatorville, and the place is stained with many crimes. In fact, the whole Equator, as the reader will gather, is, throughout its twenty-five thousand miles, a line of ignorance, savagery, and blood. It is a black line which civilization ought to paint white.

Most of the natives of the Balolo and Bangu tribes know all about the presence of the Equator from the white men, and some of them I found had made up extraordinary tales about it. One of the best and most original theories I heard from a man who had embraced the Mohammedan religion. He evidently believed that the whole earth was divided between two races, the white and the black, for he told me that the Equator had formerly been a wall a hundred feet high to keep the black and white people apart, but that the white people had wickedly torn down the wall and carried it away and were trying to overrun the half of the world belonging by rights to the blacks; and that some dark night God would set up the wall again, and then we would not dare to pull it down. "I have," he said, "a piece of the wall out-

side my hut, which you can come and see if you like."

From Coquilhatville I embarked with four men in two boats and sailed up the river to Yolongo, where we disembarked, and I marched across the savanna to Litoka, to the north of which I set up a sign. My journey was slow and tedious and devoid of incident across a parched plain until I got to the shores of Lake Albert Edward, where I engaged a native dhow to sail across the lake.

With six willing followers I reached Fort George by water. I spent three and a half months in Uganda, where, at Entebbe, a large case of prayer-books and picture-books from the Bible Tract Society awaited me. I led a very active life, although I was nearly two weeks down with fever. I visited the grave of an English officer, Lieutenant Hotchkiss, on Kome Island, which bears the inscription: "Arthur William Hotchkiss, born 1867, died 1898 Buried according to his wish on the line of the Equator, latitude 0°, longitude 32°76'."

It was at Port Victoria that I met an American, Mr. Bradley, who had come to Uganda on a sporting expedition, and who made me an offer to accompany him on a tour of exploration to Lake Kibibi and Mount Kenia. As Mr. Bradley was going with a numerous outfit I accepted, and we travelled by the Uganda Railway for sixty miles as far as the Mau Mountains, when we struck off north-east.

Mount Kenia shares with some of the Andes the reputation of being one of the most celebrated Equatorial mountains of the globe, but I need not describe it or my journey here. At the source of the River Tani my friend lent me a part of his escort to the coast, and then commenced a long and dreary journey through for the most part a flat savanna country, as this part of British East Africa is. I halted at Borati, expecting to replenish my supplies, but found it deserted. On the 11th of March, 1905, I reached the Italian settlement of Lanshani.

Ultimately I made my way down the coast to Mombasa, where I found a steamer freighted with returned coolies for Singapore and other East Indian ports, and so in the spring of last year I got once more to Padang, having in the interval encircled the entire globe by the equinoctial line. I hope to finish a book I am now engaged upon describing my travels.

I cannot close without mentioning that on this last voyage there was a little English girl, daughter of a Malay official, whom I found one day trying to sketch a most extraordinary quadruped, which she eventually showed me. "It's meant for the Equator," she said, "but I expect it doesn't look at all like it. Perhaps some day you'll be able to tell me."

It turned out to be Miss Dorothy's conception of a "menagerie *lion* running round the earth," with myself, an enthusiastic sportsman, in hot pursuit!

Laur: Peterson

After a Sketch by ALONG THE EQUATOR. [*the Author*

SALLY.

By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

IN Leicester Square the early morning sun was shining upon a motley company—foreigners of the Latin race, for the most part, idlers by necessity, who could appreciate the colour and light of the garden. Upon a bench, eyeing a bed of scarlet geraniums, sat a young man. Beside him a girl was braiding lavender. Again and again the girl glanced at the frowning brows and firmly-shut lips of her companion. He had not looked at her once. She was not very pretty, it is true; nevertheless her face had the charm of youth and kindliness. She wanted to speak to him, but a certain sensitiveness—she was barely seventeen—forbade this; so, being intelligent, she held her tongue and waited.

Meantime the youth was reflecting bitterly upon the contrast between his outer and inner man; for a decent, well-cut coat covered a stomach lacking the fustian of bread and butter. Already he had converted into cash every garment he possessed, saving those he was wearing. The coat represented breakfast—by Jove, how hungry he was!—or respectability. Coatless, he might sink to unthinkable depths.

"Thank goodness," murmured the flower-girl, "that job's done."

He turned and looked at her.

"Is that so?" he inquired, with a faint American accent. "But you have to sell the lavender, haven't you?"

"I'll sell it all before dinner-time. Won't you please buy a bunch, sir?"

"I'm not buying lavender to-day," he replied, solemnly, for the word "dinner" gnawed his vitals.

"One bunch, sir?"

"I cannot."

"You will not," she retorted, with a sigh. "What's a penny, sir?"

He smiled frostily. "A penny would buy two buns," he replied, slowly.

"Buns!" she laughed. "You don't eat—buns?"

The note of interrogation brought a flush to his thin cheeks. A Frenchman reading *Le Petit Bleu* at the next bench marvelled at the blush. "Il est bête comme une bûche, ce Goddam!" he muttered, enviously.

"I could eat this morning," said the man, softly, "not only the British bun, but the British baby."

"'Ungry? You? You're kiddin'. No, you ain't."

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"I ain't."

"It's orful to be 'ungry." Then, after an uncomfortable pause, she said, confidentially, "What are you goin' to do?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Ain't you got a father or mother?"

He told her gravely that he was that deserving object of charity, an orphan. The girl eyed him more attentively, struck by the delicacy of his features, the fine texture of his skin and hair, the brilliant eyes, indicating a facile and perfervid imagination.

"Oh, well, your pals'll 'elp you. Particlerly if they're——"

"If—what?"

"If they're—oh, you know."

"I don't know."

"If they're women. You're the sort women like."

"Thank you," he replied, stiffly, for humour slumbers when we are very hungry. "I do not take money from women."

"Proud—eh?"

"Not at all."

She glanced at him shyly as she whispered, "If you're real 'ungry—and lor', don't I know the feelin'? a clawin' like of the inside—s'pose you come along and tike a bit of breakfus with—*me*."

She brought out the pronoun boldly, but turned her eyes aside, afraid that he might resent the pity and sympathy in them. The young man hesitated for a moment; then he said, genially:—

"Thank you. Only a churl would refuse such a kind invitation."

"Garn!" she exclaimed, more at her ease. "It's a rum old world, ain't it?"

"It's a better place than I thought it five minutes ago. My name is Anthony Wellcome. What shall I call you?"

"Sally. Now follow me. And don't speak. I must think of my character."

She laughed and walked briskly away, followed by Anthony.

The pair passed from Leicester Square into Charing Cross Road. More than one man turned to look at the flower-girl as she tripped gaily on, and a gentleman of Hebrew extraction, black-bearded, red-lipped, stopped her and bought a bunch of lavender, giving a shilling and a smile.

Sally hurried on, and the Jew, reflecting, perhaps, that sweet lavender can only be bought in summer, gave chase. Had he looked back and marked the expression upon the face of the tall, thin young man behind him, it is possible that he might have postponed the purchase of more lavender.

Presently Sally turned sharply to the left, entering a quiet and secluded alley. The Jew doubled his pace; the Gentile behind doubled his fist. Twenty yards farther on the black-bearded gentleman overtook the girl, and laid a too-tightly-gloved hand upon her shoulder. At the same moment Wellcome seized him by the collar, twisted him round, and then kicked him so hard and with such accuracy of aim that the fellow fell flat on his face. He picked himself up, shot a Parthian glance of rage at Wellcome, and fled.

"Thank you," said Sally, demurely.

"Not at all. That was better than a cocktail to me. Say, do you get many shillings from such beasts?"

She nodded, laughing and blushing.

"They get nothink but 'lavender from me."

Wellcome asked no more questions, for they had come to the door of a cheap eating-house, where sausages and coffee for two were ordered. Upon these viands Anthony fell with ravenous appetite, dispatching four "bags o' mystery" one after the other. He learned from his companion that she had risen betimes to buy her lavender at Covent Garden; so she, too, ate heartily, and in silence—as is the custom in such places of entertainment. The bill was one shilling. When Sally paid it she remarked, smilingly, that the Jew's coin had been well spent on pork.

"I don't know how to thank you," said Wellcome, uneasily.

Sally put her elbows on the table. The place at that hour was almost empty. And she seemed in no hurry to leave it.

"Tell me yer story," she pleaded. "You ain't English?"

"I'm"—he laughed—"what they call in my country poor white trash." He added that he had been a journalist in San Francisco, lured to London to better his fortunes, forsaking substantial silver for shadowy gold.

"But times will mend," he concluded; "and then, Sally, you must dine with me. Where do you live?"

He whipped pencil and notebook from his pocket, but she refused to give her address, a refusal that whetted to keener edge Anthony's powers of persuasion. Finally, she revealed street and number.

"It's a lodging-house; clean, and cheap, and handy."

Handy—to what? Covent Garden, of course, and Fleet Street. She almost laughed when she read the resolution in his eye. She bade him good-bye demurely.

Now sausages and coffee had warmed the youth's intention to borrow, or attempt to borrow, a few pounds from a compatriot, once a struggling author, now a magnate in Mayfair. The magnate thrust a five-pound note into Anthony's hand; but a frosty smile chilled the young fellow's gratitude and warned him that charity, like a bullet, seldom finds the same billet twice in succession. Wellcome tried to treat the incident humorously: "A thousand thanks. A mouse once lived to help a lion." But in the street he told himself that the world was a beastly place—for the mice. None the less he took a certain pleasure in returning to Soho, where he secured, on payment in advance, a room in the house where Sally lodged. From a large window an admirable view presented in alluring perspective the domes and spires of the city. Some chimney-pots in the foreground and soot-stained roofs tickled Anthony's humour. "I shall keep my eye on *that*," he murmured, gazing intently at the glorious dome of St. Paul's Cathedral.

When he met Sally a few hours later he told her what he had done, talking to her expansively, as if they were comrades, deferring to her larger experience of the seamy side. She perceived that he was sustained by a belief in himself, although he admitted that pride had been rolled in the gutter.

"SALLY."

For her part, she said that she was living with her mother, who—a gesture indicated a tip-tilted glass! Anthony met the mother that night (having occasion to borrow a frying-pan and other trifles), and listened to a long and gin-scented autobiography. The woman had seen better days, and the dead husband and father, whose enlarged photograph hung above the mantel, appeared to have been a man of intelligence and sensibility.

From that first evening, when she assisted at his installation, Sally began to wonder why the new lodger was so different from other men. He seemed to be unconscious of her sex, although it was plain he liked to look at her face. His courtesy so troubled and perplexed her that she tested it, as she would have bit a doubtful piece of gold. "What brought you here?" Anthony met her beguiling smile with a frank laugh.

"Oh, the Fates, I suppose. I was too cock-a-whoop. And then—you."

"Me?" A daughter of Soho can put the coquetry of Mayfair into a pronoun.

"Why, yes. I haven't so many friends that I can afford to lose one. You will post me—teach me the ropes. You can help me to write a paper on flower-girls. Why not?"

As the days passed she answered that question and many others. Fortune is seldom content to kick a man once. Anthony sold at a fair price his paper on flower-girls, for which Sally supplied abundant material, but for a season he sold no other literary wares and was reduced again to dire extremity. More than once Sally fed him, and interposed that two-edged sword, her tongue, between lodger and landlady. When he computed his debt to her he swore that his gratitude would never cool. He poured upon her head the fragrant epithets of the West. She was a peach, a daisy, a night-blooming cereus!

Pluck and persistence transmuted his afflictions into the rare gold of Grub Street. "I can use this stuff," said the sub-editor of the paper. "You seem to have the hang of it."

"I nearly hanged myself getting the hang," Anthony replied, with a grim smile.

Sally and he "celebrated," as he phrased it, the turn of Fortune's tide. The mother sniffed whenever she saw the pair together, but their intercourse continued absolutely innocent. He told her everything, and she told him nearly everything. Often in the hot, sultry evenings of the dog-days they wandered into St. James's Park to sit beneath the trees. Other couples, scores of them, lay about them; and when twilight came on they could hear the brutal laugh and the silly giggle.

As a rule Anthony talked and the girl listened. Always he talked of his work and of what the future might hold. And always the girl was conscious that in that future, a cool, spacious chamber, there was no place for her. Anthony talked charmingly, for his talk had none of that aggressive quality which spoils the conversation of so many clever Americans; but more than half he said was Greek to Sally. She served, indeed, as a lay figure whereon he fitted his phrases. He was writing a—BOOK. Capitals indicate the emphasis the young fellow laid upon this sacred word. In the book was love, plenty of it; some gleaned out of St. James's Park. The billing and cooing were suggestive. But there were dun days when the sun seemed in eclipse. Anthony was positive about his men. He knew to a nicety what his hero, for instance, would do or would not do under any conceivable circumstance; but Irene—the heroine, who deserved her fine name—bothered him. "I'm done," he told Sally. "I feel my power with the men; but with the women I—er—grope." On such occasions he consulted her freely. "Would Irene do this? Would any girl do that?" The aptness of her answers delighted and sometimes confounded him.

"You have had lovers," he said one evening.

"Lots of 'em."

Under cross-examination she revealed some names. There was Alfred Duke, who worked as a scene-shifter at one of the big theatres. He, she gave him to understand, was violently afflicted. And only a short time ago she had refused the hand and heart (and a one-third interest in a small restaurant) of a black-avised Italian in the quarter.

"When a man gets a bad attack he knows it," said Anthony, reflectively. "I suppose it works the same way with a woman."

"Only more so," Sally shyly added.

He detected a note of pain.

"You—you have suffered! Poor little Sally!"

Whereat she smiled, but the shadows lay in her eyes.

As summer waned he lived more and more in his book. He was describing, delicately, with nice abstention, the life which his father's son might have lived had the father kept his estates in Maryland. The people in the book were gentlepeople—chivalrous, cultivated men, sweet, refined women. In their society Anthony was perfectly happy, and as the book grew, as the circle of friends in it expanded, he began to grudge the hours spent in Grub Street.

"Want ter kill yerself?" inquired his humble friend.

"Not yet," he replied, thoughtfully. "Perhaps I am doing too much."

"Yer look like a sackful of old horse-shoes."

"I am kind of thin," he admitted, glancing at his wrists and hands.

"And winter comin' on, too." The quiver in her voice proclaimed rigors; the whistle of sleet and wind fell bleakly on Anthony's ears.

"You are cold, Sally. Would a hot Scotch warm you?"

"No. I s'y, if—if yer'll myke a bonfire o' that bloomin' book, I'll warm myself." When he raised his brows she added, viciously, "I hate it! I hate it!"

"Then you hate me, Sally?"

She melted instantly. "It's queer that me and you, a toff, should be pals."

"Not at all." He proceeded to unveil the shining virtues of necessity. Sally's friendship had been to him a beacon and a stove. At her cheerful blaze he had warmed wits and the very cockles of his heart.

About the middle of January a cold settled upon his lungs. Then a sharp attack of pneumonia drove him to bed, where he lay babbling of a Promised Land. Sally stuck to him night and day, as a limpet sticks to the unresponsive rock. When he was strong enough to realize what she had done, she made him understand in her primal way that silence in regard to his obligations would become him better than speech. He smiled faintly, speculating vaguely concerning her forbears. One of them surely had been a person of quality. After this she was shyly sensible that he was watching her with eyes inordinately full of interrogation. He became an unhappy instance of the many who want to know and are afraid to ask. He must have been lamentably weak, because it did not occur to him that another might read the riddle. And when the mother supplied the answer he was mute with confusion.

"Sally loves yer! And she might 'ave married Alfred Duke."

"ANTHONY WELLCOME."

Her variations on this theme shall not be set down. Besides, one would need an instrument other than a pen to reproduce them. Poor Anthony listened patiently, as an invalid listens to the braying of a German band.

When, later, Sally brought him a cup of broth, she knew that he knew, and the knowledge proved a Slough of Despond to both. He was so awfully sorry for her that he had no pity for himself, only a wondering, sheepish contempt.

"Will you work at yer book to-night?"

His book? Which he had not touched for three weeks.

"Hang the book!" he said, angrily.

Next day he read his book, which was almost finished; read it and pronounced it "good." He could hardly believe that he had written it. "I suppose," he reflected, "I put every ounce of my blood into it, and all I could borrow or steal from her." Then he tried to work, and failed miserably; for it seemed as if Sally, the flesh and blood she, stood between him and a row of marionettes. After four hours' effort he burnt his scribblings and locked up the manuscript.

During the following fortnight he wrote pot-boilers, paying off doctor and chemist, although Sally's account remained unsettled. The pair did not meet so often, because she also had arrears to clear off. Each day, he noted, she grew thinner and paler. There could be no doubt about it.

The sense of obligation became a shirt of Nessus. He came of a family who had ever given more than they received, who had sacrificed to a losing cause all they possessed except honour. Now he, the last of the Maryland Wellcomes, was in debt, irretrievably, to a flower-girl.

Common sense urged him to finish his book. When this was done, not without groaning and travailing, he dispatched it to a famous publishing house, whence it returned with a polite note. Other firms proved as polite and as inhospitable. One man, however, wrote so courteously that Anthony called upon him and entreated the truth without veneer.

"Well, then, my readers tell me that the last six chapters are—rotten."

"I know it," said poor Anthony, with the calmness of despair.

The great man was so sorry that he offered to strain a point. If the author would rewrite the offending chapters the question of publication might be reconsidered. "The rest of it," he admitted at parting, "is—er—promising."

Anthony tried again and again. In some subtle way Sally understood what had come to pass. The book had once stood between herself and the man; now she stood between the man and the book. He could not see the goal because she obscured the view. One night she exploded.

"It's me. I couldn't 'elp it. I'd like ter drown myself, I would, I would!"

"Hush, hush, you foolish little Sally!"

"I'd give everythink to 'elp, and I'm only a 'urt."

He had never attempted to correct her English, judging, perhaps rightly, that it was, and must be, the measure of the difference between them. They had drifted together in the mighty stream, she a straw, he a drowning man; he had clutched her, and the pair had been swept by the fierce current into a back eddy. That was all.

"Let us try to look at this calmly," he said, as pale as she, and in a manner as passionately moved. "You are the best girl in the world, and I am the most absolutely selfish ass. With my imagination I ought to have foreseen what might occur."

"I s'pose," she murmured, resignedly, "that an imagination carn't do more'n one fing at a time. Yours was kep' busy."

"Too busy."

He eyed her with penetration. He was preparing to take an immense leap, which included a drop, although the ground on the far side seemed sound.

"Come here, Sally."

She obeyed, giving him both her hands. Standing thus within the circle of light cast by the lamp, the pair made a fine picture. He kissed her, infusing into that kiss the warmth of gratitude, the ardours of renunciation. Perhaps he realized that in kissing her he was bidding farewell to the maiden of his dreams, the Irene whom he had enshrined. When the girl felt the warm pressure of his lips upon hers, she began to tremble.

"I shall marry you at once," he whispered.

For how long did she lie in his arms? In all lives there are minutes which are infinite. When she slipped from his embrace she was smiling.

"Marry—*me?* Never!"

She sat down, laying her head upon the table in an attitude which indicated not resignation, but supplication: a mute entreaty that he would read no farther: a turning down of a tell-tale page. He bent over her.

"I shall marry you," he repeated. "The life you saved is yours. Take it. I offer it gladly and gratefully."

She raised her head. Not a foot away lay the book; around it a disordered pile of paper, the mutilated chapters. She glanced at them.

"Yes, yes," he said, eagerly. "With my mind at ease I can go back to that."

"Sure?"

"Absolutely."

"Then go back to it!"

She explained. When the book was satisfactorily finished she would marry him—if he still wanted her. But she beseeched him to leave Soho. In the country, in some cottage set far from roaring thoroughfares, let him again take up his pen. She commended Chingford and Epping Forest, while he listened with growing interest, feeling free to go, feeling at length that he must go, that the girl's wit had found a way. In three weeks at most his task would be accomplished.

"And you won't fret?"

"Fret? Now?"

He departed the next morning, gay beneath the conviction that he had done the right thing. This conviction during the days that followed suffused his work with that subtle quality of distinction so conspicuously lacking in the last chapters, so finely manifest in the rest of the book.

Upon man and work, moreover, lay the magic spell of Arcady. The end of the novel had been first conceived in an atmosphere of strife, malodorous and obscured by fogs. The hideous word "rotten" applied to it fittingly enough. Rewritten in the sweet solitudes of a forest, it was informed by the music of the woods and fragrant with the perfume of bursting bud and blossom.

He returned to town jubilant. Later, when the book was accepted for publication upon terms which foreshadowed recognition, he was queerly sensible that this jubilation needed no apology. Opinions may differ about what is merely middling, but an author is never in doubt when his work is really—as is said of a finely-cut cameo—*del primissiom laboro.*

"SALLY'S MOTHER."

Only the price remained to be paid. The thought of this, it is proper to mention, had not brought a whiff of Soho to Epping Forest. And as he descended from the roof of the Liverpool Street 'bus he had something of the bridegroom's, nothing of the martyr's, aspect.

Leaving Oxford Street, with its light and movement, he plunged into the silence and obscurity of Soho. The dun, blear-eyed houses, their pinched, poverty-stricken complexion, presented a parable which Anthony could not fail to interpret. Suddenly, out of one of the sordid public bars, reeled a woman singing an obscene song. At sight and sound of her his courage began to ebb. She reminded him of Sally's mother and all that relationship implied. Very slowly he came to a standstill. There was time to escape. Expediency whispered a score of reasons which imagination illustrated. What was he doing? Deliberately forsaking the light of the world, turning his back upon the broad highway. The sweat broke upon his skin.

"Heavens!" he exclaimed. "Am I a coward?"

And then the good blood, which had flowed generously upon many stricken fields, flushed again his pulses. The text upon the headstone of his mother's grave flamed across his vision:—

"Firm rooted in the faith that God is good."

His moral circulation was restored. Almost he could believe that love divine had sustained him, the love so faithfully reflected in the eyes of Sally, the medium through whom he had apprehended, dimly at first, but with ever-increasing distinctness, the law of the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

Entering his lodging with a buoyant step, he ascended the steep stairs till he came to the storey where Sally and her mother lived. Sally, of course, would be selling daffodils, but the mother would give him news of her. However, as soon as she opened the door, he marked upon her face a peculiar expression compounded of malice and surprise which found words in a gasping, "Lor'! You?"

"'Ow's Sally?'

"Bloomin'."

"I suppose she told you that I was coming back to marry her."

"To marry 'er—'er?"

She began to laugh—so offensively that the young man's cheek flushed scarlet. Then she turned. "Sally," she cried, "come 'ere! A gen'leman wants to marry yer. Don't keep 'im waitin'!"

But Anthony was not minded to meet his Sally beneath the inflamed and scornful eye of the mother. So he hurriedly begged that lady to send her daughter to his room, whither he retreated, followed, as he was shamefully aware, by that derisive, soul-splitting laughter. Flinging down his hand-bag he stood expectant, conscious that something unforeseen had happened, and speculating as to what it might be. When Sally crossed his threshold he cried, hoarsely, "What have you done?"

"I've married Alfred Duke," she replied, quietly. "I—I told 'im everythink! Alf says he don't care. Is the book done?"

"Sally——"

"Is the book all right?"

"Yes, yes; but you? I—I——"

She stopped him with a fine gesture. Ignorant, illiterate, soiled by life's ignoble uses, she divined that words would discolour the sacrifice. Her eyes brightened when she perceived that he understood. He took her hand in his and kissed it, the tears falling upon her thin wrist. Then she passed out of the room and out of his life.

"ALFRED DUKE."

THE COMIC SIDE OF CHRISTMAS.

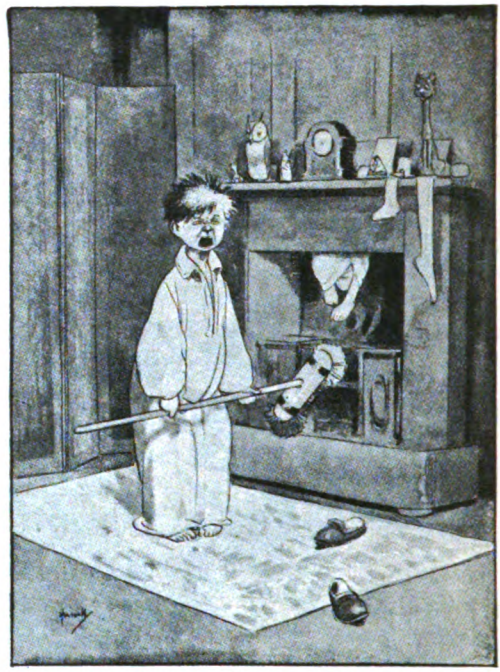
Some of the Best Picture-Jokes of Former Years.

"A SWALLOW AT CHRISTMAS" (RARA AVIS IN TERRIS).
(From the Etching by George Cruikshank, "Comic Almanack," 1835.)

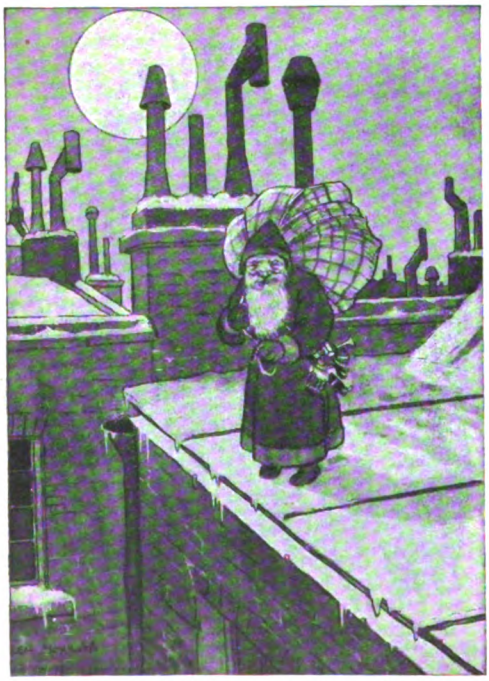
YULE-TIDE VISION.—Mrs. B.: "Where have I been? Why, shopping, of course. Don't I look like it?" Mr. B.: "Look like it! Why, you're a Christmas-tree complete!"
(Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch.")

MORE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON.—Pompous Merchant (to the Office Boy): "There, George!" (Giving Christmas-box.) "And I hope you'll have a pleasant Christmas, and that you'll spend it decently, and avoid intemp——" George: "Thank you, sir! The same to you, sir!"
(Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch.")

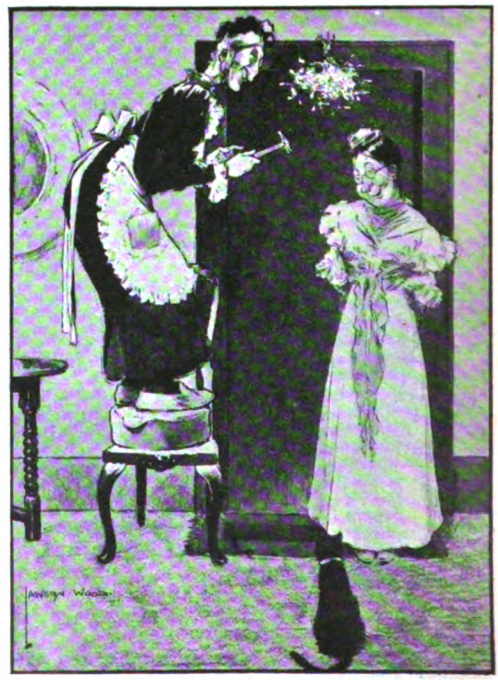
A Terrible Merry Christmas.
(By permission of the "Tatler.")



"Mother! Nurse!! Help!!! Baby's got stuck in the chimney, looking for Santa Claus, and he's making himself perfectly miserable."
(By permission of the "Sketch.")



"These patent chimney-pots are really getting too much for me."
(By permission of the "Tatler.")



"Will it be seen?"—A Christmas Idyll.
(By permission of the "Sketch.")

A SLIGHT ERROR.—"Christians, Awake!"

(By permission of "Pick-Me-Up.")

GOVERNESS: "Now, Linsley, you mustn't have any more plum-pudding. It'll make you ill!" Linsley: "Never mind, it's worf it!"

(Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch.")

NOT A TIMELY WARNING.—Mrs. Griggs: "Now, William! Do be keerful o' them there Christmas things."

(From the "King.")

"EVERYTHING COMES TO THE MAN WHO WAITS."

(By permission of the "Tatler.")

Mr. Bostock's Backsliding.

By Arthur Morrison.

IT is a terribly easy thing to fall into — imperceptibly to glide into — evil-doing; and, once embarked on the slippery descent, there is no telling how low one may descend. This, the moral of the story of Mr. Bostock, is, in accordance with modern practice, placed at the beginning of the story instead of at the end, which our grandfathers considered the proper place. Nowadays we get the moral over and out of the way as soon as possible, and find it good riddance.

Mr. Bostock was a person of that peculiar stainlessness which is only to be observed in a London suburb of the highest respectability, always in association with the precisely correct clothes for every occasion, and a comfortable income derived somehow from the City. He was no longer young, nor slim, and his large, clean-shaven countenance carried the heavy portentousness noticeable in the Strictly Proper. Regularity, Propriety, Serene Importance — these words could be traced across his white waistcoat and his pink face as distinctly as though spelt in printed letters, and Severe Respectability shone like a halo from the high polish of his crown.

Every admirer of the female sex—every discriminating person, in other words—will at once perceive that there was a Mrs. Bostock, to whom much or all of this perfection was due; indeed, the ribald of his suburb ascribed Mr. Bostock's correctitude to simple terror of his wife. This was the slander of vulgar malice, of course, but it is a fact that Mrs. Bostock was a lady well fitted to inspire terror in the unregenerate; and those whom she regarded as her social inferiors—which meant very nearly everybody—had reason to quail before her overbearing majesty.

Twenty-four years of training under Mrs. Bostock's severe eye had endowed Mr. Bostock with the shining qualities so vastly respected in his suburb, and of late her supervision had been reinforced by that of their two daughters, now grown up. It may be that it is not permitted to mere man to receive a greater share of this sort of blessing than can be conferred by an energetic wife and one full-grown daughter; that the gradual accession of assistance from another daughter, as she reaches womanhood, will overcome the fortitude of the most respectable. It is certain that Mr. Bostock's lapse occurred shortly after Julia, his second daughter—now arrived near marriageable age—had fully ranged herself by the side of her mamma and her sister in the direction of his comportment.

The family were staying at the seaside at the proper period of late summer, and, of course, at the proper place. The town is already sufficiently well advertised, so here I shall call it Scarbourne, which is not in the least like its real name. Everybody will readily recognise it, however, from the circumstance that it is the most genteel town on the English coast, where every male visitor positively must change all his clothes at least three times a day, and no lady must be seen to wear anything twice. Also, the promenade is the one place for pedestrian exercise, and the vulgar act of walking on the beach is never condoned. No place on earth basks in a more sacred odour of perfect respectability than this blessed spot, with nothing to mar its bliss but the presence of a vulgar convict prison a few miles inland, and the fact that the approach by railway lies through another seaside town of the most unpardonable description, where parents paddle on the sands among their children, and the air resounds to the banjo and tambourine of the nefarious nigger. It is said that the Scarbourne visitors barely forgave the King for the proximity of His Majesty's prison, and then only in consideration of his social position; but the railway company might beg forgiveness in vain for bringing their line through Beachpool-on-Sea.

Mr. Bostock's temptation came insidiously yet suddenly, giving him little time for choice. There was some expectation that the office in the City, which provided the means for Mr. Bostock's respectability, might require his presence for a day or two in the midst of his vacation; and there was hourly expectation of a telegram from his head clerk to call him. Mr. Bostock was somewhat puzzled, almost shocked, to detect himself looking forward to the receipt of the telegram with something vastly like pleasurable anticipation; and with this begins his backsliding.

A telegram *did* come, immediately after breakfast on a brilliant August morning. Mr. Bostock tore it open eagerly. It *was* from his chief clerk, indeed; but—it conveyed the news that the matter in question

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had been satisfactorily settled, and that Mr. Bostock's presence in London would not be required. Mr. Bostock sank back in his easy-chair in a frame of mind which he distinctly recognised as one of gloomy dejection.

Mrs. Bostock and her daughters were dressing for a morning drive in the jobbed carriage that conveyed them everywhere except for the promenade walk; and as Mr. Bostock sat back with the telegram in his hand his wife appeared, patting and smoothing her gloves.

"Oh—that telegram *has* come, then," observed Mrs. Bostock. "Then we'll ask Mrs. Berkeley Wiggs to take your seat, and will drive out a little when I've done some shopping in the town. I suppose you'll catch the ten-thirteen?"

"HERE WAS MR. BOSTOCK'S TEMPTATION, AND HERE BEGAN HIS FALL."

Here was Mr. Bostock's temptation, and here began his fall. "Y—yes!" he stammered, hastily, crumpling up the telegram and stuffing it away in his pocket. "Yes! I'll—I'll catch the ten-thirteen, of course. Too late for the fast train, of course. Of course. Yes, my dear—I'll go off and catch the ten-thirteen. Don't bother about me—I'll walk, or have a cab. Yes—of course, I must catch the ten-thirteen!"

A very easy thing, the fall of Mr. Bostock. You will observe that *he* said nothing as to the contents of the telegram—not a word. Mrs. Bostock assumed that the message was the one expected, and her husband merely allowed her the assumption. Almost anybody might have done the same thing—accidentally, as it were. And, in fact, Mr. Bostock hardly realized what he *had* done till Mrs. Bostock had departed in search of Mrs. Berkeley Wiggs, the most recent accession to her acquaintance, and Socially Immense.

Even when he did fully realize the position of affairs Mr. Bostock betrayed no symptom of remorse. His behaviour, indeed, for the next hour or so diverged every minute farther and farther from the precedent set by twenty-four years of strict regularity. He took a cab to the railway station, and during the short ride his demeanour so changed that the startled cabman scarcely recognised his fare as he emerged. Mr. Bostock's hat had settled over at a jaunty angle, and Mr. Bostock's face had acquired a joyous, almost a waggish, expression. A shade of apprehension crossed it as he approached the booking-office window and glanced nervously about him. Then he plunged his head deep in at the little hole, and demanded his ticket in a voice inaudible from without. He took his seat in the ten-thirteen train, just as he had said he would; but—and here you may begin the measure of Mr. Bostock's backsliding—he got out at Beachpool-on-Sea!

Not without some nervousness and trepidation, it is true; for the habit of twenty-four

years is hard to shake off. But once out in the High Street of Beachpool, Mr. Bostock's gradual expansion was a wonderful thing to see. He put his hands in his trousers pockets, he put his hat positively at the back of his head, and at the end of the street, by the sea, he bought a cane and swung it!

Mr. Bostock was taking a little holiday "on his own," as the vulgar say. How long he was going to stay, what arrangements he should make, and all the rest of it he had as yet thought nothing of. Here he was, free and irresponsible, at Beachpool, where nobody knew him, and ready for a holiday after twenty-four years' respectability. He went back to the shop where he bought the cane, and there bought a pipe and an ounce of tobacco. Mrs. Bostock had never allowed him to smoke anything less respectable than a cigar since they were married. Sometimes she had even bought the cigars herself. Perhaps I should not have mentioned this last circumstance, since it is far from my design to arouse sympathy for the perverted Bostock.

As for him, he grew wilder at every step along the beach. For he walked along the beach here like any low tripper, and once he actually "skated" an oyster-shell along the water—not very well. Then he stopped to listen to a group of niggers, and even laughed—laughed aloud—at a song about a "missis" and a mother-in-law, and put twopence in the tambourine rather than go away before it was finished. And as he went on among the children digging sand and their elders devouring fruit and buns, he burst into little gasps of laughter at nothing whatever, and was barely able to repress an insane desire to dance in public. The desire grew so urgent, indeed, that he walked straight on along the beach, past the last of the family groups, and into the solitude beyond. Here the cliffs began, and the shore was strewn with large stones, which presently gave place to boulders.

Mr. Bostock was two miles from Beachpool, and absolutely alone with the cliffs, the boulders, and the sea. He took a cautious glance about him, laughed aloud twice, and burst into the most astonishing fandango ever executed by an elderly gentleman having no connection with the stage. Then he plucked the hat from his head, flung it at his feet, and kicked it over the nearest boulder. Mr. Bostock had utterly thrown off the mask!

He picked his hat up, however, with some solicitude, and sat on the boulder to restore its shape. Then he held it at arm's length and laughed at it, loud and long. No hat of Mr. Bostock's had endured such derision before.

He clapped it on the side of his head, stuck his thumbs in the arm-holes of his waistcoat, and gazed out over the sea, chuckling. The great green water was beautiful, and smooth, and soft, and the day was warm. Mr. Bostock had not had a swim for years; Mrs. Bostock did not consider the exercise suitable to his dignity and his years, nor, indeed, the costume to his figure.

He had no bathing costume now, but did that really matter? There was not a soul in sight, nor likely to be one. The nearest person at Beachpool was two miles off, and Scarbourne was quite seven miles away. There was the towel difficulty, of course; but Mr. Bostock had a mind above difficulties just now, and a towel was a trifle beneath his

"MR. BOSTOCK HAD UTTERLY THROWN OFF THE MASK!"

soaring notice. As a boy he had run about to get dry, and now he chanced to have two big, clean pocket-handkerchiefs. Mr. Bostock was tuned up for a wild adventure, and this was the wildest he could think of. He took one more look along the deserted shore and up at the silent cliffs, and began to pull off his clothes.

There never was such a delightful swim as Mr. Bostock indulged in from that deserted shore. There were cool, transparent pools among the rocks that dotted the shore, and farther out there was just enough motion in the water to save monotony. The air was warm and the water of a pleasant coolness, for as yet the sun had not brought it to its full summer-day temperature. And all the while not a soul came in sight along the shore. From time to time Mr. Bostock glanced back to the solitary dark speck among the boulders which he knew to be his heap of clothes, and he saw it always quite safe.

So time went, while Mr. Bostock, from time to time floating on his back and gazing thoughtfully into the blue of the sky above, revolved in his mind scandalous fraudulent plans for the future, whereby forged telegrams from the office should procure him more holidays like this. Thus does fancied impunity embolden the evil-doer.

Still, delightful as that swim was, Mr. Bostock realized that he must come out of the water sooner or later, and at length he turned and headed for the shore, marking his course by the little dark spot where he had left his clothes. He came in slowly and easily, dreading no evil. The tide had risen a little, and he congratulated himself on getting in in time to save his clothes a possible wetting, a danger he had not considered, in the excitement of the adventure. He rose from the water's edge, grasped the boulder, took two tender steps on the shingle—and instantly rushed back into the sea and swam off as hard as he could go.

In the whole course of his hitherto exemplary life Mr. Bostock had never had such a shock—such a horrible, stunning surprise. The clothes were not his!

But this alone was a comparative trifle. For what had sent Mr. Bostock staggering back as from the charge of a bull, what had propelled him headlong into the sea and set him swimming as though the bull had turned into a shark, was the appalling fact that he had found himself confronted with a heap of *female* garments!

There seemed to be no possible mistake. It was a black, rusty-looking heap, with a rather disorganized bonnet and a pair of cloth-topped boots of the sort called "jemimas," down at heel, bulgy at the toes, and very loose and frilly about the elastic sides. It seemed, in short, the outfit of the sort of elderly female for whom the only word is "geezer."

A little way out from shore Mr. Bostock ventured to turn about and tread water. Surely that *was* the boulder on which he had left his clothes? They had been quite visible from the sea, as he distinctly remembered, and now the only heap of clothes in sight was the heap he had just fled from, lying precisely in the same spot. There was not a soul in sight, nor any human belonging except that heap of clothes on the boulder. Nobody was visible on the water, nobody on the shore. Mr. Bostock swam in a little way, till he could stand on the sandy bottom with his head and shoulders above water, and then, remembering the expedient of Mr. Pickwick in the wrong bedroom at Ipswich, called out very loudly, "Ha—hum!"

Mr. Bostock waited for an answer, but heard nothing but the sea, and saw nothing but that and the shore and the dark heap of clothes before him.

There was certainly not another pile of clothes anywhere in sight, and Mr. Bostock, his first fright over, began to grow very anxious. He walked a step or two farther in and called again, this time very loudly indeed, "Ha—hum!" And then, when no sound answered him, he proceeded—"Anybody there?"

Nobody was there, it would seem, so presently Mr. Bostock, staring wildly and anxiously in all directions, crept out of the water again. Was it possible that his eyes had deceived him?

No; the clothes were exactly what he had taken them to be, and no others were in sight. He snatched hastily at a grubby old plaid shawl that crowned the heap, and, wrapping it about him, began to explore the beach.

It was all useless. Nobody was near him, and not a scrap of his own clothing was to be seen. Mr. Bostock's mind did not work with great rapidity, but now that he had got dry by his boyhood's method of running about the beach, with some assistance from the grubby plaid shawl, he realized that he was faced by the dreadful prospect of returning to civilization disguised as a "geezer."

He lifted the shabby garments gingerly and shuddered. They had that peculiar

gritty griminess that makes any sensitive person shudder, and they smelt damp, like a rag-shop. Mr. Bostock shrank and groaned, but there was no help for it. With an infinitude of shivers and squirms he began to put them on.

He felt about the skirt for pockets, and grew conscious of a new terror. There *was* a pocket—a torn, clammy bag dangling by one corner—and it was empty! In the pockets of Mr. Bostock's vanished suit were nearly ten pounds in gold and silver, a pocket-book with several notes in it, a gold watch and chain, and some other valuables, to say nothing of his railway-ticket. He broke into a cold sweat. Not only must he go among his fellow-creatures as a "geezer," but as a "geezer" absolutely penniless!

The prospect was more terrible than anything Mr. Bostock had imagined in his life. He broke into a fit of savage indignation at the callous depravity of the wretched female who had stolen his clothes, and must now be masquerading in them as a man—in itself a scandalous offence against the law. And at that reflection Mr. Bostock's distress became, if possible, still more acute. For it struck him that he too, arrayed in the horrible clothes he was struggling with, would be committing the same scandalous offence, and liable to the same penalty!

At length the dismal toilet was complete, and Mr. Bostock, miserable enough, but ignorant even now of the amazing figure he was making by reason of his unskilful management of the unaccustomed garments, addressed himself to the next step. Beachpool was two miles in one direction, Scarbourne more than seven the other way. Pulling nervously at the strings of the battered bonnet which all too scantily covered his lack of tresses, he turned first one way and then the other. Which way should he go?

The rising tide answered the question for him. Long before he could traverse the seven rocky miles under the cliffs he would be caught by the tide; so perforce he turned back to Beachpool. He did it with some vague sense of relief, too, for he had not yet invented a means of dodging Mrs. Bostock. He did not even know where she might be encountered. The capture of Mrs. Berkeley Wiggs had been the object of some ambition, and now that it was effected, Mrs. Bostock would probably keep her as long as possible—for a drive inland—to lunch—anything convenient. But even supposing Mrs. Bostock safely out of the way, how could her wretched husband possibly enter the select boarding establishment undetected in the guise of a "geezer"?

The way to Beachpool was filled with perplexity, and Mr. Bostock grew desperate as he went. What could he do? Whose help could he ask? Who would lend money to an apparently and obviously disreputable old woman who told a cock-and-bull tale of being a gentleman of substance, much respected in the City, in need of a little temporary assistance? The very best he could hope for from such a course was that inquiries would be made, which was the last thing he wanted; for in his mind's eye he saw the terrible figure of Mrs. Bostock, stern, suspicious, and incredulous, standing at the other end of those inquiries. But it would be far more likely that he would be given in charge of the police straightway.

Mr. Bostock was convinced that to beg would not only be difficult, but useless; and in his dire extremity he began to consider the possibility of stealing—of stealing clothes, money, anything that would get him out of this horrible mess. So low had the principles of the hitherto blameless Mr. Bostock been brought in course of a mere hour or two from his first tiny, almost involuntary, departure from the path of rectitude. (Refer to moral, *ut supra*.)

As a man of business it had, of course, occurred to him to wire to his office for a telegraphic money-order, to be sent to the nearest post-office. But as a man of business also he remembered that any person applying for the money must produce complete proof of his identity. Proof of his identity in this amazing rig! But, to begin with, the telegram to the office must cost at least sixpence. And where was the sixpence?

And so Mr. Bostock crept into Beachpool in a very different state of mind from that in which he had left it—meditating theft. He was ready to steal the pennies from a blind man's hat. Indeed, he would have preferred that proverbial form of larceny before any other, from its comparative safety and simplicity; but blind men have far too little in their hats.

He slunk about the back streets, sweating with terror at the notice he was attracting. It was only because of his clean-shaven face that he had dared to come into the town at all, and now he began to wish himself back on the empty beach. But something must be done, and desperation forced him far beyond his natural courage, which was not very great. He found himself in a street

leading directly into the High Street, and straight before him in the High Street was a cheap tailor's, where dummy figures, labelled "This style, thirty shillings," stood by the door.

No Peri ever gazed at the portals of Paradise with half the ardent longing with which Mr. Bostock stared at the door of that cheap tailor's shop. Very gladly would he have given a cheque for fifty pounds for one of those shoddy suits and a ticket to London. But he had no cheque-book, and if he had, what would any sane tailor think of such a proposition from a disreputable-looking old woman?

But the shop, with its possible salvation, attracted him. Perhaps he *might* make an arrangement with the tailor. He drew nearer, eyeing the dummies at the door with an affectionate interest which might well have aroused the notice of any observer, and, in fact, did attract the attention of the shopkeeper, lurking like a spider in the recesses of his shop. Even in his present excitement, Mr. Bostock was sane enough to see the impossibility of either stealing a suit off a dummy, or running off with the dummy complete, clothes and all, under his arm. But as he neared the doorway he could not resist the impulse to extend his hand to the coveted garments; and at that moment the shopkeeper appeared.

He was a shiny, stout, frock-coated Jew, and he said, very peremptorily, "Here, vat you vant? Out o' dis here!"

Mr. Bostock thrust all his resolution into his voice; it was a rather large, round, rolling voice, very impressive from a confident, middle-aged gentleman in the right clothes, but startlingly out of character with his present outfit.

"I—ah—wish to see you privately on a matter of business," said Mr. Bostock.

"Ah, I dessay," replied the shopkeeper; "ve got nodden to give avay here. Hook it, missis; sharp!"

"But I assure you—if you will only listen——"

"Got no dime to stand talkin' mit you. If you *von't* go—then *pht!* B'leesman!"

Mr. Bostock had not noticed that two policemen were inspecting him with some curiosity from the nearest corner. Now he saw them with a sudden twinge of alarm, and straightway began a hurried retreat across the road.

"'I—AH—WISH TO SEE YOU PRIVATELY ON A MATTER OF BUSINESS,' SAID MR. BOSTOCK."

"Hi! You there! Here—come here!" cried one of the policemen, starting smartly after him.

At that Mr. Bostock lost all hold of his wits, and, snatching up his skirts in both hands, ran madly up the street he had come by, followed by both the policemen and the beginnings of a joyful crowd.

With no more thought of disguise, no more plans or schemes, nothing but a frantic desire to get away, anywhere, anyhow, Mr. Bostock scampered up one narrow street and

down another, with a gathering hunt behind him. The bonnet dangled over his shoulders by the strings round his neck, and the bulgy "jemimas" threatened to fly off his feet as he ran. Blind instinct taught him to turn each corner as he came to it, and so keep out of view of his pursuers as much as possible; and fortunately his way led him through the old town, where the fishermen's

"MR. BOSTOCK LOST ALL HOLD OF HIS WITS, AND, SNATCHING UP HIS SKIRTS IN BOTH HANDS, RAN MADLY UP THE STREET."

alleys favoured his flight. But Mr. Bostock was a poor runner, and it was the mere spur of terror that kept him ahead. He caught at a post and swung into a street leading down to the sea, and as he did it he met a gust of wind that took the bonnet clean away up the street behind him. There was an alley to the right, and into that he plunged, bonnetless and somewhat bald; and farther still, growing slower and more "blown" as he went, till he emerged at the back of a row of unfinished houses in the outskirts of the town. And here he trod on a brickbat which tore the "jemima" sideways on his foot and flung him headlong.

He could run no more. His little remaining breath was clean knocked out of him, and he lay where he fell, beaten and done for. But presently, as the first shock of the fall wore off, he became aware that the noise of pursuit had ceased, and that, as a fact, he was alone behind the unfinished houses, and comparatively safe. The lost bonnet had saved him, for the hunters naturally kept on up the street along which they found the thing bowling, and so off on the wrong track.

Mr. Bostock climbed painfully to his feet, and crawled, panting, behind a broken fence. Why he had been chased with such persistence he could not divine, but, at any rate, it was clear that he must get out of Beachpool with no more delay. He put the plaid shawl over his head, and made shift to pull the rest of his dress into some sort of order. Then he started out, with much timid reconnoitring, to tramp to Scarbourne by road.

There was nothing else to be done. He must approach the back way to the select boarding establishment, and take one of the servants, who might recognise him, into his confidence. He would promise anything—a sovereign, five pounds, whatever the girl asked—to be smuggled in during the absence of his family. It was a difficult expedient, but the only one. And with this last resort in view Mr. Bostock began his nine-mile tramp.

He went with the greatest caution till he was well clear of Beachpool, and even then only ventured to walk his best—which was not very good, for he was mightily tired already—when nobody was in sight. Twice he stopped to extract small pebbles from the "jemimas," which had cracks convenient for their admission; and then, as he approached the confines of a village, he stopped for a more peremptory reason still. For there was a bounce from the hedge behind him, a pair of stalwart arms clasped him round, and a loud voice shouted by his ear, "Here he be, sergeant! I got him! Sergeant! Sergeant!"

"HERE HE BE, SERGEANT! I GOT HIM!"

Struggles were unavailing, for the arms clipped him firmly just above the elbow, and the affrighted Mr. Bostock perceived that they were encased in blue sleeves, with an armlet; at the same moment a hatless policeman came running from a cottage by the wayside and seized him in front.

"Get the handcuffs, sergeant! He be a desprit char'cter!" bawled the voice in the captive's ear.

"All right—we won't stand to none of his despritness here," replied the sergeant, dexterously seizing Mr. Bostock by the wrist and collar. "Come along, you!"

"I—I—I've had my clothes stolen!" gasped Mr. Bostock.

"Had yer—ha! ha! That's a good 'un," cried the sergeant. "Had his clothes stole!"

"Ha! ha!" echoed the other captor, catching Mr. Bostock's other arm; "that be a moighty good 'un, sergeant!"

"But I have, I tell you!" desperately wailed the victim.

"All right, me fine feller," grimly responded the sergeant; "you needn't make a song about them clothes. We've got 'em 'ere for ye all right. Come along!"

A flash of perplexed hope confused Mr. Bostock's faculties, and then, as he was led toward the cottage, a slatternly old woman appeared at the door.

"Yes!" cried the old woman, shrilly, "that's the blaggard right enough. That's my shawl over his 'ed! An' my other frock! An' my boots! An'—an' what ha' ye done with my bonnet, you low thief? Sergeant, he's been an' sold my lovely bonnet!"

"What?" cried Mr. Bostock. "Are these things yours?"

"'Course they are, impidence! Comin' into people's 'ouses a-night an' stealin' wittles, an'——"

"Then I give that woman in charge!" interrupted Mr. Bostock. "She's stolen my clothes, and ten pounds, and a pocket-book, and my watch and chain!"

At this the old woman spluttered with rage, and the two policemen guffawed aloud. "You're a gay 'un, you are! There ain't no watch-pockets in *them* clothes! You shall have 'em, my boy—we're a-goin' to put 'em on ye afore we take ye back. Here y'are!"

With these words Mr. Bostock was forced in at the door of the cottage, and so to a room at the back.

"Here's yer clothes, my hearty," proceeded the sergeant; "and precious glad you'll be to get into 'em again, I don't think. Come along!"

With that he shut the door behind them, and presented to Mr. Bostock's astounded eyes—a suit of drabbish yellow, decorated with black "broad arrows"! Nothing but the uniform of the convict prison!

Mr. Bostock stared wildly. Was this some frenzied nightmare, or was he really stark mad?

He gabbled, incoherently, "No, no—stole my clothes—bathing—not them—name of Bostock—refer to my bankers—no—it's all a mistake!" And then he stopped, with open mouth, as the state of the case dawned on him slowly.

Some wretched convict had escaped and left these things. He had entered the cottage in the night for food, had gone off disguised in the only clothes he could find, and had wandered, hiding in lonely places, till he had reached the sea-shore. And then he had made another change—at Mr. Bostock's expense!

And, indeed, that was exactly what had happened. And the curiosity of the police at Beachpool, the chase, and now the final capture—all were due to that invaluable invention, the telephone.

"Come along—into 'em!" urged the sergeant, with the horrible clothes in his hand. "You was precious anxious about 'em just now. Or shall we shove 'em on for ye?"

"No, no, I tell you—it's a mistake. Take me to Scarbourne—no, wire to Cornhill. I'll give you five pounds—ten—fifty!" Poor Mr. Bostock struggled to his feet and feebly made for the door.

The horse was whipped up and the village was left behind, which at any rate was some relief. Twenty minutes' smart drive brought the party within distant sight of Scarbourne, and within very near sight of an open carriage, which they rapidly overtook. Mr. Bostock's disorganized faculties were barely beginning to rearrange themselves, but he *did* recognise that carriage, and the people in it. With a gasp he slid off the seat, to hide himself in the bottom of the cart.

"Hold up!" exhorted the constable, hauling at his arm. "Sergeant! he's tryin' to hide from them ladies in the carriage! P'r'aps he's had somethink o' theirs!"

The sergeant gazed down on the cowering form, and then gave the horse an extra flick. "P'r'aps he has," he said. "We'll ask 'em."

And thus it came about that Mr. Bostock,

"MR. BOSTOCK WAS LED FORTH IN CONVICT GARB."

The succeeding quarter of an hour is too painful for description. But at its expiration Mr. Bostock was led forth in convict garb—it was very tight, but in the flush of their triumph the village police force of two suspected nothing from that—and pushed into a light cart with a fast horse, in presence of the whole population of the village. All that his struggle had gained for him was the distinction and interest, in the popular eye, of being very firmly handcuffed.

grimy, bruised, handcuffed, and bedizened with broad-arrows, was hauled up from the bottom of the cart and presented for identification to the horrified gaze of Mrs. Bostock, Miss Bostock, Miss Julia Bostock, Mrs. Berkeley Wiggs, and the coachman on the box.

After that nothing mattered. The handsome apologies of the prison governor were a mockery, for Mr. Bostock would have preferred to stay with him.

The Prince of Puzzle-Makers.

AN INTERVIEW WITH SAM LOYD.

By George Grantham Bain.

The puzzles in this article are published by special permission of Mr. Sam Loyd. The solutions will appear in our next number.

IT was like renewing my youth to meet him—to hear him ask me if I remembered the "Fourteen-Fifteen" puzzle, or the trick donkeys, or "Get Off the Earth." And to hear how those old friends of boyhood's days came to exist and something of their history since I first knew them—that was like meeting an old, old friend and hearing him tell the story of his life. Yet one can never speak of the "Fourteen-Fifteen" puzzle or "Get Off the Earth" as old. They are perennially new. Long after the brain that gave them life is quieted—and may that be many, many years hence—a new generation will be watching the Chinaman fade away at the movement of the pivoted card; or shifting the counters so as to compel Fourteen and Fifteen to take their places in serial relation. Sam Loyd is not of one generation any more than he is of one country—he is universal and everlasting.

MR. SAM LOYD.
From a Photo. by H. F. Raess.

A quiet man, with a ready tongue and a quick wit showing through a twinkling eye — that is what first impresses you about the famous puzzle-man. He is reputed to have made a million dollars out of that active brain; yet he is as modest of demeanour and as quiet of dress as though he were a clerk in a business establishment at twenty-five dollars a week. His moustache is white now and his head a little bald — for has he not been entertaining the world for fifty-five years with his odd conceptions? But I can fancy him when he made his first puzzle fifty-five years ago, younger-looking but no more acute mentally than he is now, when he handles sometimes one hundred thousand letters a day from his correspondents, eager to share in the prizes he offers for the solution of his puzzles.

Out of his side-pocket, as he sat down in the wicker rocking-chair in my private office, he took something round, and looked at it with an amused smile.

"I didn't bring it along to show you," he said, "but perhaps it would amuse you."

I took it from him and examined it. You have doubtless seen what the Chinese have done upon the same lines—carving a ball within a ball, or a fully-rigged ship in a bottle. This was a wooden ball, perhaps two inches in diameter, with a careful reticulation, within which appeared another reticulated ball, moving freely, and within that another and another and another—five in all (Fig. 1).

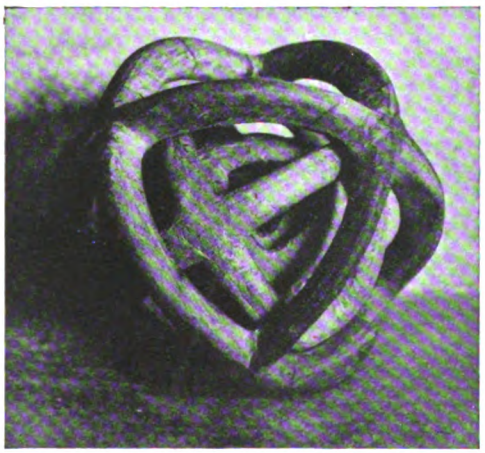
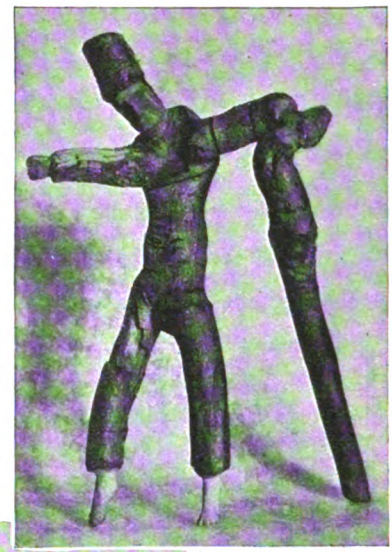


FIG. 1.—FIVE CAGES, ONE WITHIN ANOTHER, CARVED BY SAM LOYD OUT OF A CROQUET-BALL.

"I did it last week," he said, "out of a croquet-ball. It interested me to do it,

because it recalled something that happened a good many years ago. You know the 'Little Church Around the Corner' up here in Twenty-eighth Street? Well, I was a pupil there, and in the same class were the two Vanderbilts and James Gordon Bennett of the *Herald*. One day we were told to bring in the most ingenious thing we could devise. Bennett brought something made of paper, and the Vanderbilts, I believe, something made of leather. I carved a ball



FIGS. 2 AND 3.—"NATURAL CARVINGS" FROM SAM LOYD'S CABINET—A SNAKE AND RIP VAN WINKLE. *From Photographs.*

like this, and it was selected as the most ingenious thing among them."

Again the hand went into the capacious pocket, and a curious bit of carving came out. It was a forked twig, taken just as Nature made it; and, with a face carved under a natural hat at one end and two feet outlined at the other, it was Rip Van Winkle to the life. Mr. Loyd said he had found it in the Catskills—Rip's own country. "Doesn't he look as though he had been asleep a long time?" he asked. Certainly Rip's wooden legs were warped as though he had been out in the night air a long time. Mr. Loyd made another exploration, and brought out a snake—red-mouthed, coiled for a spring. "I found that piece of wood up at Ticonderoga, where it is said Ethan Allen killed the rattlesnake," he said. "I haven't changed it at all. I am always coming on odd things like that. I have a cabinet at home full of them."

Evidently Mr. Loyd's faculty of observation is acute. You or I would not have seen the rattlesnake in the root, or the little old man in the forked twig.

He does not tell it of himself, but Mr. Loyd as a boy had a power of imitation and an aptness at ventriloquism which made trouble for all who came within his mischievous activities' range. He was just a keen-minded vigorous boy, as alert physically as he was mentally. And of this material they tried to make a civil engineer. He took the course and started on the practice of the profession. But already Nature had begun to point out to him the sphere in which he was intended to shine. He had devised several puzzles before he came into his teens. One of the earliest of his problems, drawn by himself in a crude way, was the problem of the three men living in three houses within a wall having three doors, who quarrelled and built each a wall to give him free access to the world outside without coming in contact with his neighbours. Here it is (Fig. 4), just as the nine-year-old boy Sam drew it many years ago. It is told that three neighbours, who shared a small park, as shown in the sketch, had a falling out. The owner of the large house (A), complaining that his neighbours' chickens annoyed him, built an enclosed pathway from his door to the gate at the bottom of the picture (A). Then the man on the right (B) built a path to the gate on the left (B), and the man on the left (C) built a path to the gate on the right (C), so that none of the paths cross, and each man has an exit opposite his door.

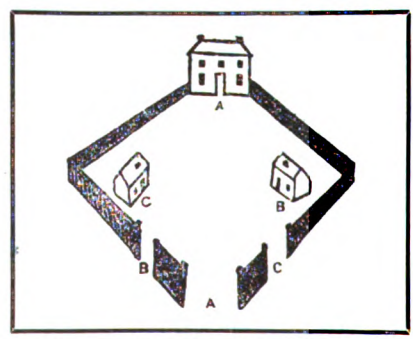


FIG. 4.—ONE OF SAM LOYD'S FIRST PROBLEMS, INVENTED WHEN HE WAS ONLY NINE YEARS OLD—IT IS FULLY EXPLAINED IN THE ARTICLE.

With the talent for this sort of thing half developed in his brain, what had he to do with civil engineering and its slow road to success and wealth? When he was still only seventeen, and just beginning to be an engineer, he devised a puzzle which made for him in a few weeks ten thousand dollars. It decided him abruptly not to spoil a good puzzle-maker for a poor civil engineer. This puzzle is one which will live always, I believe, for it is as great a favourite to-day as it was half a century ago. It is the puzzle of the trick donkeys (Fig. 5).

"Fancy!" as Hedda Gabler's husband so often reiterates, that not millions but thousands of millions of these have been sold, and you will understand in what a curious way Mr. Loyd found the key to success—not in great things, but in little things often multiplied. In fact, it is his theory, verified so well in his own experience, that it is the little and not the great thing that is most often profitable.

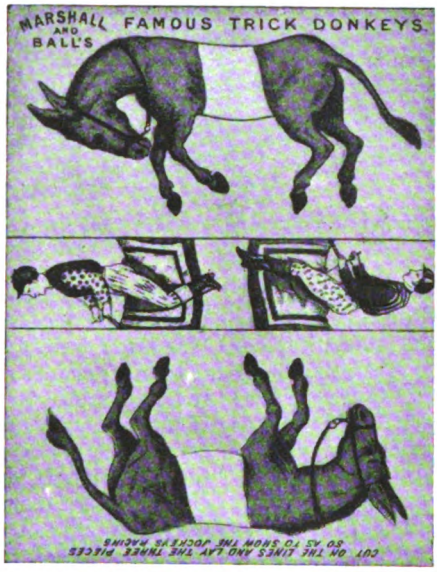


FIG. 5.—THE FAMOUS DONKEY PUZZLE WHICH BROUGHT SAM LOYD THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS WHEN HE WAS SEVENTEEN.

"I am still taking orders for those donkeys in million lots," he said. "When I first sold them I had my own printing outfit; but now I have the printing done by someone else. Of course, my legal rights in all my early devices have lapsed by this time, but copyrights and patents mean very little to me. People don't care for my puzzles unless they can have them with my name on them. Those trick donkeys have been associated with a great many incidents in the lives of business houses and business men. There is a big dry-goods and department store in New York which uses a star as a sort of trade-mark. The donkeys were responsible for that. When the firm started in business they gave me an order for a million copies to give away. When I was setting up the card, I noticed that there was a space between the donkeys which looked blank, so I stuck in a star. When I saw the head of the house later, he said to me, 'What is the meaning of that star, Mr. Loyd?' 'To make little boys ask questions,' I answered. He laughed and said, 'You see, it made me ask one.' His partner came up at this moment and said, 'We've used that star now in connection with these million cards; why not use it hereafter as a trade mark?' And that was the origin of an emblem which has since become famous in the world of trade.

"I recall another incident of the donkeys' career. P. T. Barnum, who was running his circus when the donkeys were most popular, asked me if I would take ten thousand dollars and call them 'P. T. Barnum's trick donkeys.' I said I would, and about that time I was filling an order from a big Philadelphia concern for a large number. So I shipped them the cards with Barnum's name on them. Back came a letter from the head of the house, saying, 'We have several tons of advertising literature of P. T. Barnum on hand, awaiting your orders. I'm enough of a humbug myself without advertising through my store that much greater humbug Barnum.' For a time I was afraid I should lose my cards, but I went to Philadelphia, explained the matter, and persuaded the house to take the cards and use them."

Another very famous puzzle was "The Mystery of the Boarding-house Pie." Fig. 6 illustrates and explains it fully. Mr. Loyd says that this was one of the most popular puzzles he ever devised.

I asked Mr. Loyd what was his best puzzle. "Get Off the Earth," he said, promptly. "Unfortunately it came out in a bad year and it didn't achieve the success of some of the others. But I am going to revive it, and there is no doubt it will equal their success. It was developed under rather odd conditions. My son—who thinks I can do anything—said to me one morning, 'Here's a chance for you to earn two hundred and fifty dollars, pop,' and he threw a newspaper clipping across the breakfast table. It was an offer by Percy Williams of two hundred

and fifty dollars for the best device for advertising Bergen Beach, which he was about to open as a pleasure resort. I said I'd take a chance at it, and a few days later I had worked out the Chinaman puzzle. It was two thousand five hundred dollars' worth of copies of the puzzle, and agreed to pay me a salary of fifty dollars a week to run a puzzle column. Since that time I have received salaries of twenty-five to one hundred dollars

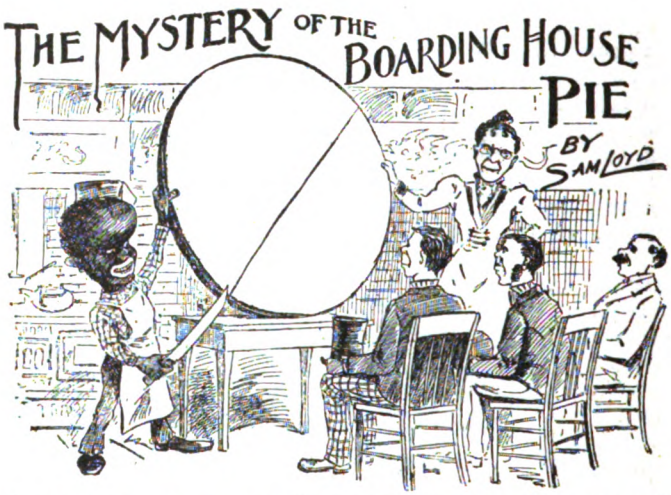


FIG. 6.—PROPOSITION: INTO HOW MANY PIECES, OF VARIOUS SIZES, IS IT POSSIBLE TO DIVIDE A PIE WITH SIX STRAIGHT CUTS OF A KNIFE?

two pieces of card, which were fastened together so that they moved on a pivot. As you looked at them there were thirteen Chinamen plainly pictured. Move the cards together a little and there were twelve perfect Chinamen. You couldn't tell what had become of the other Chinaman, try as you would. Scientists have tried to solve it without success. Oh, yes; there is a solution, but I sha'n't tell what it is.

"Well, on my way to show the puzzle to Williams, I stopped at the *Brooklyn Eagle* office to ask Anthony Fiala—who afterwards led an expedition to the Arctic—to touch it up a bit for me. He was the artist of the *Eagle* and an old friend of mine. I could draw pretty well—in fact, I should make a very fair newspaper artist—but, of course, he knew more about it than I did. Fiala was so taken with the puzzle that he asked if he might show it to St. Clair McKelway, the editor. McKelway was much taken with it, and wanted to know the price. I told him it wasn't for sale. He showed it to the publisher of the paper. He wanted to know the price. Then he called in William Ziegler, the millionaire who financed two trips to the Arctic, who wanted to buy it. But I told them all it was disposed of. Finally they proposed that I should run a puzzle department for the paper; and before I left them they had given me an order for a week from several papers at the same time for conducting their puzzle departments. Besides, I have a big source of profit in the letters I receive. I offer prizes for the solution of puzzles. Just now I have a distribution of ten thousand dollars on my hands. These competitions bring me sometimes one hundred thousand letters a day. I have a corps of clerks go over them and pick out, possibly, a thousand that I ought to see personally. But the letters I sell because the addresses and names are valuable. Two days ago I sold a lot of one hundred thousand letters to a mail order house for one hundred and twenty dollars, and the next day I sold a Sunday newspaper another lot at one dollar a thousand—one hundred dollars. That isn't a bad addition to one's income."

Mr. Loyd has had very erratic fortune in disposing of his inventions and devices. Like all inventors he has made fortunes for others in things out of which he made almost nothing. The most striking illustration of this is the game of Parcheesi. Its origin and history are as interesting as any romance. A concern dealing in street-selling articles, with which he had done some business, called him in one day and said, "We have just bought a lot of pieces of cardboard divided into coloured squares. They were intended to be used by a worsted house in advertising

their goods. We bought them at rubbish prices. Now, we want you to make up some sort of a game that will sell for a small price, using these squares—something we can sell in the street." Mr. Loyd worked on the problem for a few minutes, and then handed over the scheme of the game of Parcheesi. "That ought to go," he said. "How much do we owe you?" said the head of the concern. Mr. Loyd said that it was so simple a matter he didn't care to charge anything for it. But the man insisted on giving him ten dollars. And that is all that Sam Loyd got out of a game which made millions for its manufacturers. Only a few days ago Mr. Loyd was in a shop in New York looking at games, and he asked the shop-girl which game was the most popular. She replied that they sold more of Parcheesi than of all the other games put together. Mr. Loyd, by the way, was the inventor not alone of the game, but of the story which went with it, to the effect that it had been found among the natives of East India by a missionary.

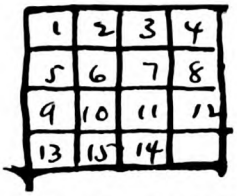


FIG. 7. — THIS IS A ROUGH SKETCH OF THE "FOURTEEN-FIFTEEN" PUZZLE, A PROBLEM WHICH COULD NOT BE SOLVED.

Mr. Loyd has patented and copyrighted many of his inventions, but he failed to get a patent on the "Fourteen-Fifteen" puzzle. It consisted of fifteen square blocks in a box which would hold sixteen (Fig. 7). They were arranged serially, with the fifteen before the fourteen, and the puzzle was to shift them about until the fifteen was in its right place.

"Of course it couldn't be done," said Mr. Loyd, "and that's why I didn't get my patent. It was necessary then to file with an application for a patent a 'working model' of the device. When I applied for a patent they asked me if it was possible to change the relations of the fourteen and fifteen. I said that it was mathematically impossible to do so. 'Then,' said the Commissioner, 'you can't have a patent. For if the thing won't work, how can you file a working model of it?' His logic was all right, and the result was that I didn't get my patent. In spite of that, however, there are thousands of persons in the United States who believe they solved that puzzle. I was talking with my shoemaker the other day, when a big Irishman, sitting not far away, who had overheard us, said, 'Are ye the mon that invinted th' Foorteen-Fifteen puzzle? I did that puzzle.' I laughed, and said that couldn't be, because it couldn't be done. 'Don't you say I didn't do it,' he replied, 'or I'll flatten the nose on y'r face.' He was a pretty big man, and I suppose he could have done it, too. Yes, there were many thousands of persons who were sure they had done it; but the thousand dollars reward I offered for anyone who would do it was never claimed. Not long ago the Sunday editor of a New York paper wanted to use it again as a supplement, and I suggested he should offer a thousand dollars reward for the solution. He refused. He said he remembered very well that he had done the puzzle once, and he wasn't going to throw away a thousand dollars. Before I could persuade him to offer the reward, I had to bring the thousand dollars to his office and deposit it in the safe. It was never claimed."

Mr. Loyd is not only a clever artist but he was once a wood engraver, and engraved the plates of his puzzle pictures himself. One of these he showed me in his files as a curiosity of his earlier career. It is the Rip Van Winkle puzzle.

FIG. 8.—THE RIP VAN WINKLE PUZZLE: FIND THE DOG.

I asked Mr. Loyd what was the mental process of making a puzzle.

"Some I work out very slowly," he said, "and some come to me like a flash. They are all based on mathematics. I have no regular method and no regular hours of work. Sometimes I do three puzzles in a day. Often a puzzle will suggest itself to me when I am talking to a man. The other day I was talking with the maker of a fountain pen about offering some as prizes,

and in the course of our conversation he made a contract with me for one thousand dollars' worth of advertising in my puzzle magazine, which I am just starting. Suddenly a puzzle came into my mind and I sketched it for him. Here it is."

Mr. Loyd drew nine eggs in rows of three like this (Fig. 9) :—

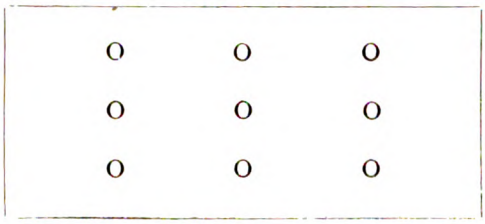


FIG. 9.—THE COLUMBUS EGG PUZZLE.

"The problem is to draw straight lines to connect these eggs in the smallest possible number of strokes. The lines may pass through one egg twice and may cross. I called it the Columbus Egg Puzzle. It seemed so easy to my friend the manufacturer that I said to him, 'If you solve it in an hour I will give you your thousand dollars' worth of advertising free.' He thought it was easy. But neither he nor any of his employés could solve it in an hour or a day.

"When you've solved that problem, try this one about Bo-Peep and her little sheep (Fig. 10). You may think that the one will help you with the other, but you'll find it won't."

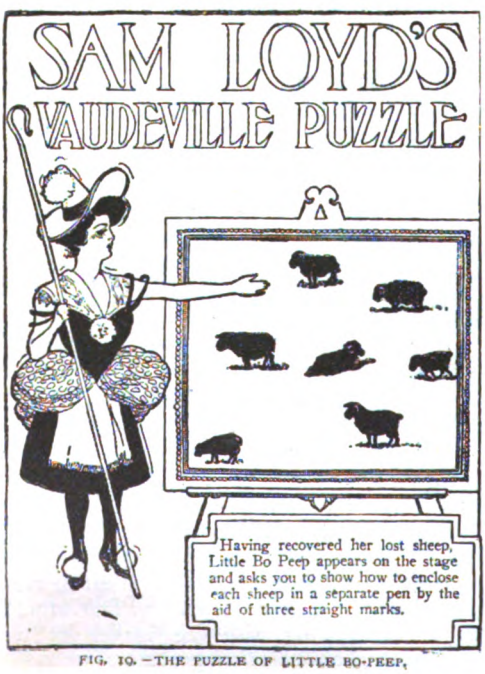


FIG. 10.—THE PUZZLE OF LITTLE BO-PEEP.

He was once expert, he told me, in cutting silhouettes, and to prove that his hand had not lost its cunning he took my desk scissors and a scrap of paper, and in less than a minute had presented to me a very good outline of the head of George Washington (Fig. 11). These silhouettes, he told me,

FIG. 11.—SAM LOYD IS AN ADEPT AT CUTTING SILHOUETTES, WHICH HE USES AS ADVERTISEMENT DEVICES—HERE IS ONE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, CUT IN LESS THAN A MINUTE FOR THIS ARTICLE.

he sometimes used in advertising devices, and he recalled the occasion when a firm called him in to devise an advertisement, and he took out his scissors and quickly cut out profiles of the members of the firm. He presented them as a valuable advertising suggestion. The two men liked the suggestion, but when Mr. Loyd said he wanted fifty dollars for them they demurred. They argued that the silhouettes would not be saleable to anyone else, and that Mr. Loyd would probably sell them cheap, as he must sell to them or throw the silhouettes away. But when they saw him take them up to tear them to pieces, they cried, "Don't do that. You might not be able to make them so well again." And they ended by paying him his fifty dollars. That is a small fee compared with some Mr. Loyd has received. He was asked by a maker of sewing-machines to devise a puzzle, and he named a rate of one hundred dollars. But when he came to deliver the goods, he said to the manufacturer, "Here is your one-hundred dollar puzzle. But I have another

which I have just thought of that is certain to be a great success. But I should have to charge you one thousand dollars for it." The manufacturer looked at the second puzzle and said it was just what he wanted, but he did not feel that he could pay so much. However, did Mr. Loyd ever back his own judgment? Mr. Loyd said he did. Would Mr. Loyd be willing to sell on condition that if the device was a "blooming success" he was to receive one thousand five hundred dollars, and if not he was to get nothing? Mr. Loyd would and did. The bill was made out on those terms, and Mr. Loyd went away. Six months later he appeared at the office of the manufacturer, and had to recall himself to that gentleman's memory.

FIG. 12. — THIS IS THE CELEBRATED "PONY PUZZLE," OF WHICH MORE THAN A THOUSAND MILLION COPIES WERE SOLD—THE PROBLEM IS TO CUT OUT THE SIX PIECES AND REARRANGE THEM SO AS TO FORM ANOTHER PONY.

"Oh, yes," he said, "we owe you one thousand dollars, I believe, Mr. Loyd." "No, you don't," said Mr. Loyd; "you owe me one thousand five hundred dollars, or nothing." They looked up the bill, and those were the terms specified. So the manufacturer called in his manager, who said he thought the firm owed Mr. Loyd one thousand five hundred dollars. And it was paid.

The Pony Puzzle, which was the second famous puzzle Mr. Loyd devised, was suggested to him in an odd way. He was returning from Europe on the steamer with Andrew G. Curtin, then Minister to Russia, and once famous as War Governor of Pennsylvania, and they were discussing the White Horse Monument on Uffington Hill, Berkshire, England. This is the colossal figure of a white horse engraved on the side of the hill, visible for many miles. It is said to be more than a thousand years old. Mr. Curtin thought that it might contain a suggestion for a puzzle. Mr. Loyd accepted the suggestion, took a piece of black paper and a pair of scissors, and in a few minutes produced the Pony Puzzle. This (Fig. 12) is the way it was originally made. Mr. Loyd afterwards improved it in form, but he says he still has an affection for the original old nag. Mount this silhouette on a piece of thin card, cut out the six pieces separately, and see in how many ways they can be arranged to make a pony, and how nearly you can make one like the white horse. The whole country laughed for a year over this ridiculous pony, and more than a thousand million copies of it were sold.

"Pigs in Clover" was another of Mr. Loyd's most famous puzzles. It has been imitated, but none of the imitations has equalled the original in popularity. The pigs were tiny spheres, which were to be made to take their places in little holes in a board by inclining it until they rolled in. Almost as surely as you got the last one to roll into place the inclination you gave the board caused another to roll out.

"How Old was Mary?" (Fig. 13) was one of the most popular puzzles ever put before the public, and created a perfect *furore* of discussion when it first appeared. Can any of our readers, either by mathematics or by mother-wit, arrive at a solution of this brain-reeler?

Mr. Loyd is a great believer in the educational value of puzzles. They involve the principles of mathematics, but they sugar-coat that pill for the reluctant boy. He is swallowing knowledge while he amuses himself. Some of the most noted scientists have been puzzle-makers—Tyndall, Huxley, Humboldt—but the world's puzzle-maker, known to three generations and beloved of all of them, is Sam Loyd.

FIG. 13.—"HOW OLD WAS MARY?"

BIGE HOAK.

By EDWARD PRICE BELL.

"WHAT'S th' matter 'th *you*, Tom?" inquired squat Aunt Bet, putting a plate of sizzling-hot fritters before the brown old farmer, and moving the maple-syrup jug within easy reach.

Uncle Tom's cast of countenance certainly justified the question. The late October sun, a dazzling mass of gold, was just risen, and the farmer had returned hungry from a long tramp, his face trickling with perspiration, his great top-boots soaked with dew. At the opposite end of the table sat Freddie, aged seven, slight and sinewy, blue-eyed, fair-haired, high-browed, sweet-mouthed Uncle Tom, Aunt Bet, and Freddie — only these left in the roomy old farm-house, with its white weather-boarding, green shutters, and imposing hip-roof.

"I've found out who's been stealin my hogs."

Aunt Bet turned sharply round from her fritter-frying. Freddie gazed curiously and fixedly at his father.

"Th' ain't any longer a doubt about it," Uncle Tom went on. "'Smornin' I traced a heavy carcass to th' guilty man's door. Th' hog'd been stuck in our very barn-yard an' drug away. I'm goin' to have th' law on 'im to-day."

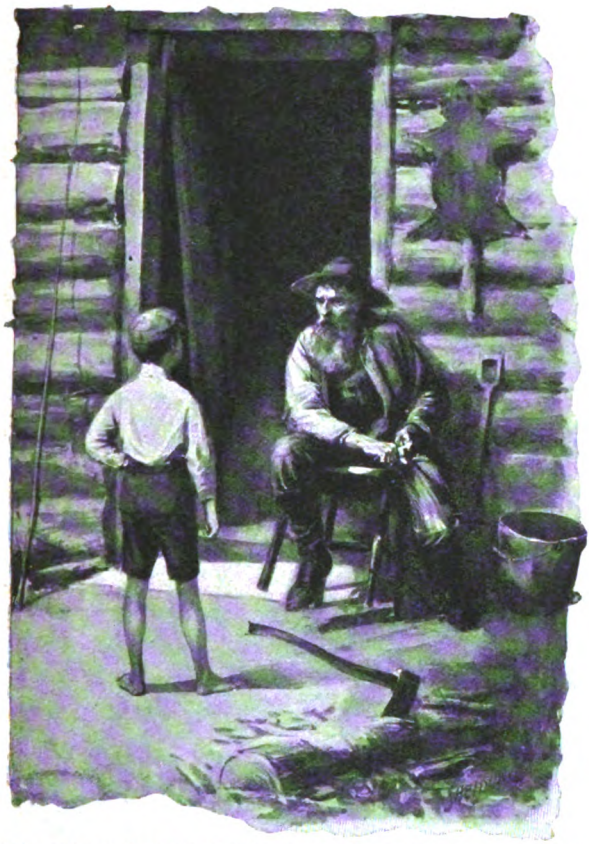
"Who is it, Tom?" finally asked Aunt Bet, in a strained voice.

"Bige Hoak."

Half an hour later, his deep-folded brows closely knit, his sunburnt face funereally solemn, Uncle Tom saddled and bridled his grey mare, Puss, and started for the county-seat at a jog-trot. As he rode the old farmer was looking back over a matter of forty years. In all that time few days had passed without his seeing Bige Hoak—rent-free tenant on a little clearing in the remote backwoods of his place.

Jogging and thinking, Uncle Tom reproduced much of Old Bige's career—saw him, when the men were seining, pull Jim Jones out of a dangerous eddy, swimming backwards to the shore, one claw-like hand clenched in Jim's long black hair; saw him, during the smallpox epidemic, tending the sick and burying the dead, just as if he had been vaccinated, or had already had the disease; saw him, that awful winter, digging night and day to get through the snow-banks in the woods to fetch food to his family. "An' yit," mused Uncle Tom, "allus a rascal; allus steal anything he could git his hands on. In the past generation or so, I guess Ole Bige's done me out uv at least two thousand dollars' worth uv hogs. I'll have the law on th' scoundrel."

More of Old Bige's life intruded itself into Uncle Tom's memory. He recalled, many, many years ago, when the ethically untrammelled backwoodsman had brought a pair of young squirrels to Mary as a birthday present —Mary, then a very tiny girl, now a grown woman, with babies of her own. Also, Uncle Tom lived over again the terrible ordeal of Frank's fatal illness, the time when the very life seemed to go out of the world. And Old Bige was all mixed up in that affair—always appearing at the kitchen door to know how Frank was; always stealing in with his disreputable, semi-crownless old felt hat in his hands, and looking down on Frank's thin face as if it were that of his own boy. And, stumbling away from Frank's newly-made grave, his heart crushed, his sight failing, Uncle Tom remembered that he had run upon Old Bige's bent figure, crouching among



"'BIGE,' SAID FREDDIE, LOOKING STRAIGHT INTO THE OLD MAN'S EYES, 'FATHER SAYS YOU'VE BEEN STEALING OUR HOGS.'"

the roots of a great maple tree, shuddering from head to foot.

"Git along, Puss!" he exclaimed, whisking the mare with the rein and kicking her gently. "Be switched if ever I seen a more blindin' October sun!"

"Hullo, Freddie; what mout you be doin' s'fur frum hum 'smornin'? Come in, my boy; come in."

Lips and cheeks lacking their wonted colour, eyes wide and serious, Freddie pushed open Bige Hoak's rickety gate, and approached the old woodsman, lazily whittling by his cabin door, in the radiant warmth of the autumn day.

Ragged was Old Bige, rangy and round-shouldered, rusty-bearded, sluggish, gawky, lips and chin tobacco-stained, black eyes restless as a jackal's, but boding harm to no man.

"Reckon th' ain't nothin' wrong?" queried Old Bige, interested.

"Bige," said Freddie, looking straight into the old man's eyes, "father says you've been stealing our hogs."

Silence, and a slight pallor tinging Old Bige's dark, wrinkled skin.

"Wh — what did y' — say— Freddie?"

"Father says you've been stealing our hogs. And he's gone to the county-seat to-day, mother says, to have you arrested. And mother says it's a penitentiary offence."

Old Bige's head went into his hands, and he bore hard upon his temples, as if to combat a great ache. When he raised his eyes they were red and his cheeks were stained.

"Freddie," he said, laying his hands tenderly upon the boy's shoulders, "run back hum now, an' don't tell nobody y've seen Ole Bige."

Like a flash Freddie was off, his little feet flying along the wood-path, the flitting light checkering his lithe figure and golden crown.

His old carpet-bag hastily packed, Bige issued from the hut and started off to the north-west—the opposite direction from Uncle Tom's, four miles away in the treeless lowlands. Turning, he dwelt for a moment on the black-mouthed hut. There had been enacted most of his life-drama; there his children had been born, and had died; there his wife had lived with him for upwards of forty years.

Old Bige set down his bag, broke some tobacco off his black "twist," filled his pipe, and tried to light it. There was a brisk breeze from the north-west and the match was blown out. Again Old Bige tried. This time the tobacco caught, but it was only well alight when the burning particles were scooped out of the pipe by the wind and carried into the tinder-dry leaves a few feet above Old Bige's head.

The leaves were fired. Old Bige watched half-a-dozen of them crinkle, grow black, and fly off in ash. Then he saw that a considerable area of the tree was on fire. He watched it dully. In a minute or two the whole tree-top was a blazing mass. Burning twigs were falling to the leaf-strewn ground, and the fire was running out fan-shaped ahead of the breeze. Old Bige continued to gaze dully.

Another two or three minutes and a dozen trees were ablaze and roaring, and the fire was creeping and leaping along the ground, with a look and a crackle of sheer delight.

Old Bige's eyes and mouth were agape. His hands were tight-clenched together. He stood like one turned to stone. Now everything before him, and for a good distance on each side of him, was aflame. Still he stood, transfixed. He seemed like one in sleep, in a dream, who is assailed by some monstrous thing and yearns to strike out, but is paralyzed—conscious, but unable to move. At last from Old Bige's lips broke a scream like the cry of a wild beast mortally stricken. With the cry came liberation of muscle, and Old Bige was off at the pace of a deer—long and awkward and old, but with a body like iron and muscles like strands of steel. Southward he sped to "head" the flames. They were travelling at a rapid rate—a rate that quickened with the passage of every moment, for every moment meant greater heat. And this heat was already indescribable. Sometimes it belched forth unaccountably, and more than once Old Bige fell and rolled over and over to pass out of its consuming breath.

Rounding the fire, Old Bige ran for the wood-path, tearing his way through the underbrush, slashing his face, rending his clothes, forging on impetuously, driving in all directions showers of twigs and sticks. Coming out into the wood-path he glanced back towards the fire. It was advancing with a rush and roar. The path in that direction was empty.

Wheeling, Old Bige started the other way at a long, swift stride. His quick, expert eyes were flashing in all directions. Always he was bending, peering out through the underbrush, looking ahead, running, running. The wild game was aroused and fleeing — pheasants starting up, hares bounding, squirrels, foxes, and what-not hurrying with all their might. The air whirred with the flight of insects and birds. All the wood-life was stirring, shivering, hastening. Mindless Nature knew that the fire-demon was coming; that death, instant extinction, rode the woodland air.

Coming upon a spring-fed brook, sparkling and gurgling through the woods, Old Bige saw a little figure, face downward, hands planted upon a flat stone, just in the edge of the current. On the ground by the figure was a cap. Thirsty from his long journey, Freddie was sucking up the cool, delicious water of the woodland stream.

"Freddie," said Old Bige, gently, "git y'r cap an' hurry."

Pulling the cap over his head and scrambling up, the boy gave a startled glance at the woodsman, noting his torn clothes, bleeding face, and laboured breathing.

"Come, Freddie; the woods's afire. Skip down the path as fast as y' kin, an' Ole Bige'll bring up the rear."

Without a word the boy was away. His slim, brown legs were strong, his little body a dynamo. Old Bige, coming at his long,

"WITHOUT A WORD THE BOY WAS AWAY."

measured stride behind, anon glancing over his shoulder, watched Freddie's speeding figure with a grim, admiring smile. "God bless 'im, how he flies!" "Feet patters like rain!" "Keep it up, Freddie, an' we've got th' red fiend beat!"

When the path rose Freddie slackened his pace in a way that troubled Old Bige, but when the succeeding declivity came, again his legs flashed as before, his little body forged forward, and Old Bige heaved a sigh of relief.

The roar of the fire was becoming louder, and the air less easy to breathe. Intermittently it was smoke-laden. Sometimes the smell was acrid, sometimes sweet, sometimes aromatic and innocent, sometimes stifling. Old Bige kept close watch on the boy to see how the smoke-contaminated air would affect him. Happily he was breathing at a lower level, and the heat and smoke were rising, always rising. Possibly he could bear up. How magnificently he ran!

Suddenly, to Old Bige's ineffable horror, a turn of the path brought them face to face with a vast tongue of flame, licking and leaping its destructive way full across their course. Coming to an abrupt halt, Freddie turned a flushed, frightened face upon Old Bige. His great eyes were full of the question, "What shall we do?"

Instantaneously came Old Bige's decision, and the undergrowth on the left began to break and crash as the old woodman's long body tore and burst its frenzied way through it. Freddie was on the old man's back, clinging tight, his teeth set in his lower lip, his little arms sunk in the deep folds of Old Bige's wrinkled neck. The brush and saplings were thick. The ground, in places, was a tangled mass of grass and vines. If all this growth, like powder from a long summer's drought and heat, opened a quick path for the flames, for the moment it gave protection from some of the gathering smoke and from much of the heightening temperature of the fire-infested woods. Old Bige tried to fight his way round to the right and press on towards the open farmlands. But the fire was leading out that way, and so he began to work back in the direction of the stream where he had found Freddie drinking.

"Chariots of Israel!"

From Old Bige's lips.

In a comparatively open space he had paused for breath, setting Freddie down. Behind them roared the fire that had cut them off. To the north west, coming at a slower rate, owing to the less density of the woods, the line of fire and smoke was clearly seen. Great tree-trunks were wreathed in glittering rings, their interwoven tops one huge pyre. Above this body of roaring, luminous heat rolled mountains of flame-pierced smoke. Higher yet, in the clear upper air, swam feathery layers of ashen cloud. The gleams of the sun were ash and smoke broken. The colours of the fire were constantly changing, crimson and orange, purple and green—the very rainbow unravelled and wrought into a towering fury of advancing flame.

"Chariots of Israel!" cried Old Bige again. "I'm thinkin' th' hull world's afire. Here, Freddie!" in an altered, eager tone, "none uv that, my boy, none uv that!" Freddie had sunk down in a paroxysm of terror and grief. "Git on to Ole Bige's back, sonny; there's a game fight left in us yit!"

And on they went, Old Bige cleaving the brake like a battering-ram. Freddie, clinging close, pressing his face flat against the woodman's back, heard and felt the twigs swishing and breaking about his head. Fragments of the splintered brush worked into his hair and under his clothing, cutting and stinging like bits of glass. Occasionally, half-choking, Old Bige had to loosen the child's clasp about his throat. "I see th' light, Freddie!" "Hold, my boy, we're gittin' on!" "See, it ain't so thick here; bymeby we'll reach th' water, then th' maple orchard, then th' open!"

But the light did not break ahead, and it seemed to Freddie that the crashing of the wood was just as before, and all the trees were oak or beech or hickory or pine—no maple orchard yet. Besides, the fire was getting so close that it heated the air, stung the nostrils, and oppressed the lungs. But Freddie did not murmur, only sealed his eyes, bit to the blood, and kept his death-like grip.

Oh, for the waterway through the jungle, for the hurrying, widening, deepening stream! Like a cooling life-flood the vision of it coursed along the parched channels of Old Bige's half-delirious brain. He had seen quite enough to realize that by no possibility could he outrun the fire. Every moment it was gaining. Hither and yon, where the fuel was more combustible, the thicket denser, red lines streamed to the fore like mounted flanking columns, the massed conflagration, the main body of the enemy, ever moving quickly up to their support. Clinging as tightly to Freddie's legs as

Freddie clung to his neck, reckless to ferocity, panting and sweating and bleeding, Old Bige butted and rent and pushed and stumbled towards the water. The veins in his forehead and wrists bulged and beat. All his muscles strained and protruded. His teeth bit like a steel-trap. Within his deep chest was a mighty commotion. His great heart, his sound heart, built and buttressed by sixty years of glorious air and sun, pumped and throbbed and strove, like an engine battling in a ship that battles with the sea.

Liquid music. Sparkle and glide and gurgle. Jets and drops, heavenly cool, flying upward, jewelling the air, spilling precious refreshment upon hot cheeks and brows. Old Bige had lurched down the low bank into the dimpling, hastening water. "Freddie!" he called, gaspingly, dropping upon hands and knees in the current, "git into 't an' drink!" Lying flat, repeatedly plunging their heads beneath the water, the old man and the child drank, and drank again. Neither spoke. For the moment, neither could.

Then Old Bige was upon his feet, looking back. The fire was racing the current, sweeping the banks clean. Behind it were acres upon acres of blackened sod, bristling with smoking stumps. The stream was shallow here, the bed hard and smooth. Old Bige grasped Freddie's hand, and rapidly they splashed along between tangled masses of undergrowth and skyward-looming trees. The banks grew higher, water trickled down the gravelly slopes, brooks joined the main

"OLD BIGE BUTTED AND RENT AND PUSHED AND STUMBLED TOWARDS THE WATER."

stream, the creek was becoming a river, and the water began to be so deep that Freddie got through it with painful difficulty. Old Bige was almost lifting the boy along, the small feet only now and then touching the bottom.

Ceaselessly the eyes of the woodsman shifted from the fire to the steepening banks and the glassy, circling, sun-sprinkled surface stretching indefinitely before. Smoke and smell and heat. The fire scarcely fifty yards away. Again Old Bige shouldered Freddie on to his back, and went forward at his long stride. But the deepening water, clinging heavily to his legs, retarded him too. And the air was so hot, so mixed with smoke and ash and odour, that it was hard to breathe, and breath did not give its wonted fillip to Old Bige's overwrought and ebbing strength.

Not necessary to look back now. The fire almost above them, to the right and to the left, crackling in the underbrush, roaring in the tree-tops, jetting, spouting, curling, serpent-tongued, chromatic, multiform. Old Bige's head was down. Again, as in the jungle, it was a blind plunge onward. Hot ashes and burning fragments rolled down the banks, making a great splash and hiss at the edges of the stream, adding steam to smoke. Man and boy were beaded and drenched. All at once Freddie cried out, shrilly:—

"Oh, Bige, it's blistering me!"

Like a plummet the woodsman shot into the water, carrying the child under with him. Then he was up again, and he had shifted Freddie to his chest. When the heat streamed down from the right it met Old Bige's humped back; when it streamed down from the left it beat against the same obstruction—Freddie always out of its scorching breath. When it rushed to the attack from both sides at once, threatening to cook its victims alive, Old Bige dived with his little charge and swam, came up, staggered, and dived again. His hair, brows, lashes were burnt to the skin, his eyes bloodshot, his face and lips cracking, his tongue like a bone. All he attempted to say was something inspiriting to the boy. "Courage, Freddie! See how deep an' wide th' crick's gittin'; see how high th' hills! Th' sugar-maples 's jist a step furder, an' that's whar we git away!"

The grey mare, Puss, reeking with lather, swung into the lane in front of Uncle Tom's house. White and flurried, the old farmer slid to the ground and rushed indoors, the floor quaking under his tremendous tread.

"Betty!" he cried. "Betty! Betty!"

Aunt Bet hobbled from her little back sewing-room, open-mouthed.

"Betty, th' woods 's afire! I been seein' th' smoke an' flames fur ten miles. Whur's Freddie?"

Aunt Bet gave a piercing cry, and Uncle Tom caught her in his massive arms.

"Tell me, Betty! Did Freddie go to th' woods to-day?"

"Mebbe so—mebbe so!" shrieked the mother; "I ain't seen 'im sence mornin'!"

Rushing to the barn yard, Uncle Tom caught a young horse by the forelock, led him into the lane, slipped the bridle from the spent beast to the fresh one, leapt on the latter's bare back, and flew up the sandy road on the two-mile journey to the edge of the maple orchard. Hundreds were before him. The whole valley was aroused. Uncle Tom could see a great throng of men among the maple trees, some fighting the fire in the leaves on the ground, beating it out with brush; others felling trees, dragging them away with horses and oxen, and turning under the dry grass with breaking-ploughs. The fire had burnt the denser woods to the ground, reached the more open maple orchard, and was under control.

Sweeping up to the assembled people, Uncle Tom rode swiftly hither and thither, looking for his boy—the baby of his big family. Men called to him, some seriously, some chaffingly, but Uncle Tom took no notice. Back and forth he rode, round and through and round. At last, drawing rein before a crowd of hatless, bare-armed men, the tears streaming down his bronzed cheeks, the old farmer burst out, hoarsely and brokenly:—

"Has anybody—seen—my boy—Freddie?"

At this instant a man rushed up from the direction of the river, crying:—

"Come, men! Some feller wuz swimmin' amidstream 'th a boy. He wuz yellin' fur help. Jim Jones swum out, an's bringin' th' boy ashore, but th' man's a-go'n a-drownd! Jim says he kin swim, but won't!"

Nor would he.

And he fought them off—that scratched and bruised, and singed and blistered, and half-insensible old woodsman, who had saved the boy, and writ himself gigantic and immortal in the annals of the valley. The divers brought him up, and before nightfall he was stretched in Uncle Tom's front parlour, amid a relative magnificence that made his old hut look like a prehistoric cave. There was a continuous stream of

"LIKE A PLUMMET THE WOODSMAN SHOT INTO THE WATER, CARRYING THE CHILD UNDER WITH HIM."

callers. Everybody walked lightly and spoke in whispers, the men grave-visaged, the women red-eyed. Still unconscious, but out of danger, lay Old Bige, like a hero who had made an empire, or saved one. The shadows thickened; the lamps were lit. Aunt Bet saw Uncle Tom, bowed and weeping, passing through the kitchen, where she had sat for an hour or two, Freddie clasped in her arms, her withered lips glued to his singed and matted hair.

"Tom," she said, "ain't it about time th' officers wuz comin' to git Ole Bige?"

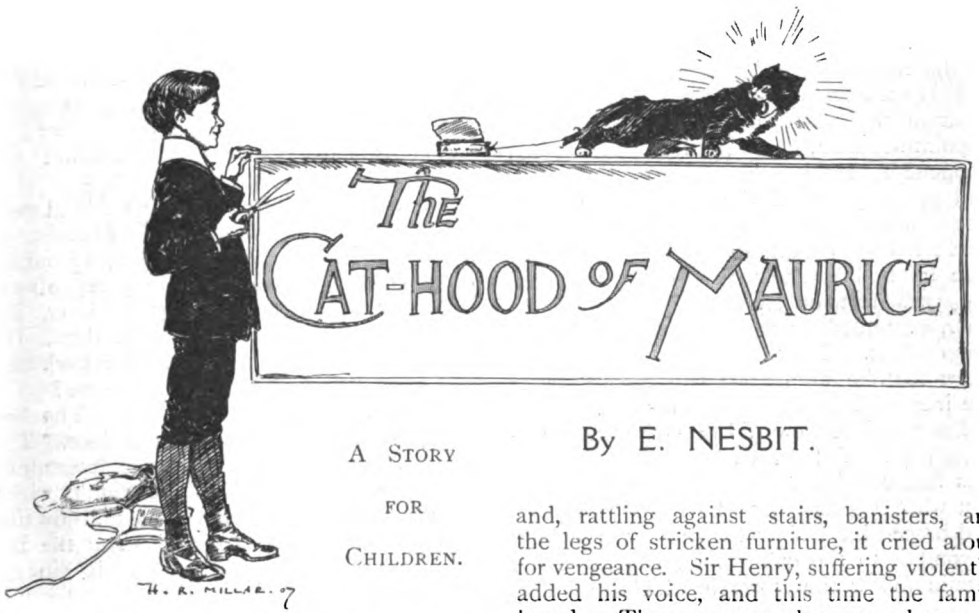
Uncle Tom shook his head.

"Ain't they comin' to-day?"

"No."

"No? W'y, Tom, didn't y——"

"No, Betty; thank God, I didn't!"



The Cat-hood of Maurice.

A Story for Children.

By E. NESBIT.

TO have your hair cut is not painful, nor does it hurt to have your whiskers trimmed. Round wooden shoes, shaped like bowls, are not comfortable wear, however much it may amuse the onlooker to see you try to walk in them. If you have a nice fur coat like a company promoter's, it is most annoying to be made to swim in it. And if you had a tail, surely it would be solely your own affair; that anyone should tie a tin can to it would strike you as an unwarrantable impertinence—to say the least.

But it is difficult for an outsider to see these things from the point of view of both the persons concerned. To Maurice, scissors in hand, alive and earnest to snip, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to shorten the stiff whiskers of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman by a generous inch. He did not understand how useful those whiskers were to Sir Henry both in sport and in the more serious business of getting a living. Also it amused Maurice to throw Sir Henry into ponds, though Sir Henry only once permitted this liberty. To put walnuts on Sir Henry's feet and then to watch him walk on ice was, in Maurice's opinion, as good as a play. Sir Henry was a very favourite cat, but Maurice was discreet, and Sir Henry, except under violent suffering, was, at that time anyhow, dumb.

But the empty sardine-tin attached to Sir Henry's tail and hind legs—this had a voice, and, rattling against stairs, banisters, and the legs of stricken furniture, it cried aloud for vengeance. Sir Henry, suffering violently, added his voice, and this time the family heard. There was a chase, a chorus of "Poor pussy!" and "Pussy, then!" and the tail and the tin and Sir Henry were caught under Jane's bed. The tail and the tin acquiesced in their rescue. Sir Henry did not. He fought, scratched, and bit. Jane carried the scars of that rescue for many a long week.

When all was calm Maurice was sought and, after some little natural delay, found—in the boot-cupboard.

"Oh, Maurice!" his mother almost sobbed, "how *can* you? What will your father say?"

Maurice thought he knew what his father would do.

"Don't you know," the mother went on, "how wrong it is to be cruel?"

"I didn't mean to be cruel," Maurice said. And, what is more, he spoke the truth. All the unwelcome attentions he had showered on Sir Henry had not been exactly intended to hurt that stout veteran—only it was interesting to see what a cat would do if you threw it in the water, or cut its whiskers, or tied things to its tail.

"Oh, but you must have meant to be cruel," said mother, "and you will have to be punished."

"I wish I hadn't," said Maurice, from the heart.

"So do I," said his mother, with a sigh; "but it isn't the first time; you know you tied Sir Henry up in a bag with the hedgehog only last Tuesday week. You'd better go to your room and think it over. I shall have to tell your father directly he comes home."

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Maurice went to his room and thought it over. And the more he thought the more he hated Sir Henry. Why couldn't the beastly cat have held its tongue and sat still? That at the time would have been a disappointment, but now Maurice wished it had happened. He sat on the edge of his bed and savagely kicked the edge of the green Kidderminster carpet, and hated the cat.

He hadn't meant to be cruel; he was sure he hadn't; he wouldn't have pinched the cat's feet or squeezed its tail in the door, or pulled its whiskers, or poured hot water on it. He felt himself ill-used, and knew that he would feel still more so after the inevitable interview with his father.

But that interview did not take the immediately painful form expected by Maurice. His father did *not* say, "Now I will show you what it feels like to be hurt." Maurice had braced himself for that, and was looking beyond it to the calm of forgiveness which should follow the storm in which he should so unwillingly take part. No; his father was already calm and reasonable—with a dreadful calm, a terrifying reason.

"Look here, my boy," he said. "This cruelty to dumb animals must be checked—severely checked."

"I didn't mean to be cruel," said Maurice.

"Evil," said Mr. Basingstoke, for such was Maurice's surname, "is wrought by want of thought as well as want of heart. What about your putting the hen in the oven?"

"You know," said Maurice, pale but determined, "you *know* I only wanted to help her to get her eggs hatched quickly. It says in 'Fowls for Food and Fancy' that heat hatches eggs."

"But she hadn't any eggs," said Mr. Basingstoke.

"But she soon would have," urged Maurice. "I thought a stitch in time——"

"That," said his father, "is the sort of thing that you must learn not to think."

"I'll try," said Maurice, miserably hoping for the best.

"I intend that you shall," said Mr. Basingstoke. "This afternoon you go to Dr. Strongitharm's for the remaining week of term. If I find any more cruelty taking place during the holidays you will go there permanently. You can go."

"Oh, father, *please* not," was all Maurice found to say.

"I'm sorry, my boy," said his father, much more kindly; "it's all for your own good, and it's as painful to me as it is to you—remember that. The cab will be here at four. Go and put your things together, and Jane shall pack for you."

So the box was packed. Mabel, Maurice's kiddy sister, cried over everything as it was put in. It was a very wet day.

"If it had been any school but old Strong's," she sobbed.

She and her brother knew that school well: its windows, dulled with wire blinds, its big alarm bell, the high walls of its grounds, bristling with spikes, the iron gates, always locked, through which gloomy boys, imprisoned, scowled on a free world. Dr. Strongitharm's was a school "for backward and difficult boys." Need I say more?

Well, there was no help for it. The box was packed, the cab was at the door. The farewells had been said. Maurice determined that he wouldn't cry and he didn't, which gave him the one touch of pride and joy that such a scene could yield. Then at the last moment, just as father had one leg in the cab, the Taxes called. Father went back into the house to write a cheque. Mother and Mabel had retired in tears. Maurice used the reprieve to go back after his postage-stamp album. Already he was planning how to impress the other boys at old Strong's, and his was really a very fair collection. He ran up into the schoolroom, expecting to find it empty. But someone was there: Sir Henry, in the very middle of the ink-stained table-cloth.

"You brute," said Maurice; "you know jolly well I'm going away, or you wouldn't be here." And, indeed, the room had never, somehow, been a favourite of Sir Henry's.

"Meaow," said Sir Henry.

"Mew!" said Maurice, with scorn. "That's what you always say. All that fuss about a jolly little sardine-tin. Anyone would have thought you'd be only too glad to have it to play with. I wonder how you'd like being a boy? Lickings, and lessons, and impots, and sent back from breakfast to wash your ears. You wash yours anywhere—I wonder what they'd say to me if I washed my ears on the drawing-room hearthrug?"

"Meaow," said Sir Henry, and washed an ear, as though he were showing off.

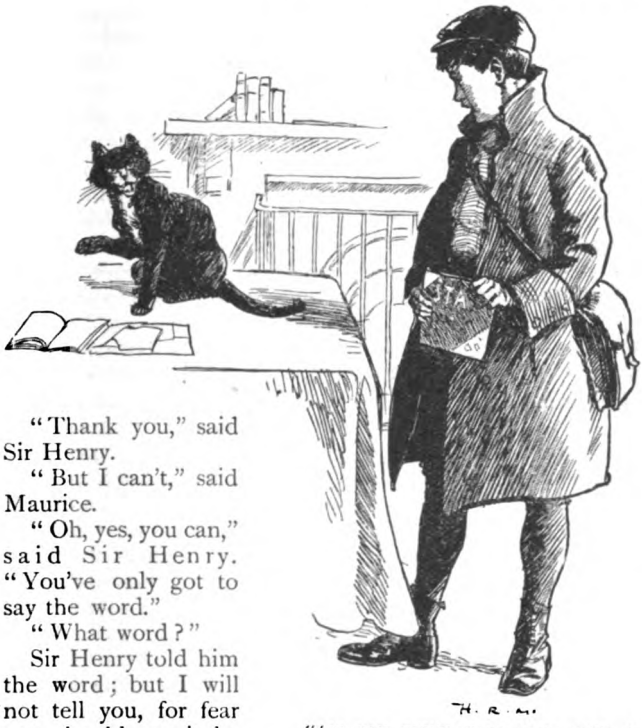
"Mew," said Maurice again; "that's all you can say."

"Oh, no, it isn't," said Sir Henry, and stopped his ear-washing.

"I say!" said Maurice, in awestruck tones.

"If you think cats have such a jolly time," said Sir Henry, "why not *be* a cat?"

"I would if I could," said Maurice, "and fight you——"



"'IF YOU THINK CATS HAVE SUCH A JOLLY TIME,' SAID SIR HENRY, 'WHY NOT BE A CAT?'"

"Thank you," said Sir Henry.

"But I can't," said Maurice.

"Oh, yes, you can," said Sir Henry. "You've only got to say the word."

"What word?"

Sir Henry told him the word; but I will not tell you, for fear you should say it by accident and then be sorry.

"And if I say that I shall turn into a cat?"

"Of course," said the cat.

"Oh, yes, I see," said Maurice. "But I'm not taking any, thanks. I don't want to be a cat for always."

"You needn't," said Sir Henry. "You've only got to get someone to say to you, 'Please leave off being a cat and be Maurice again,' and there you are."

Maurice thought of Dr. Strongitharm's. He also thought of the horror of his father when he should find Maurice gone, vanished, not to be traced. "He'll be sorry, then," Maurice told himself, and to the cat he said, suddenly:—

"Right — I'll do it. What's the word, again?"

"——," said the cat.

"——," said Maurice; and suddenly the table shot up to the height of a house, the walls to the height of tenement buildings, the pattern on the carpet became enormous, and Maurice found himself on all fours. He tried to stand up on his feet, but his shoulders were oddly heavy. He could only rear himself upright for a moment, and then fell heavily on his hands. He looked down at them; they seemed to have grown shorter and fatter, and were encased in black fur gloves. He felt a desire to walk on all fours—tried it—did it. It was very odd — the movement of the arms straight from the shoulder, more like the movement of the piston of an engine than anything Maurice could think of at the moment.

"I am asleep," said Maurice—"I am dreaming this. I am dreaming that I am a cat. I hope I dreamed that about the sardine-tin and Sir Henry's tail, and Dr. Strong's."

"You didn't," said a voice he knew and yet didn't know, "and you aren't dreaming this."

"Yes, I am," said Maurice; "and now I'm going to dream that I fight that beastly black cat, and give him the best licking he ever had in his life. Come on, Sir Henry."

A loud laugh answered him.

"Excuse my smiling," said the voice he knew and didn't know, "but don't you see—you *are* Sir Henry!"

A great hand picked Maurice up from the floor and held him in the air. He felt the position to be not only undignified but unsafe, and gave himself a shake of mingled relief and resentment when the hand set him down on the inky table-cloth.

"You are Sir Henry now, my dear Maurice," said the voice, and a huge face came quite close to his. It was his own face, as it would have seemed seen through a magnifying glass. And the voice—oh, horror! — the voice was his own voice—Maurice Basingstoke's voice. Maurice shrank from the voice, and he would have liked to claw the face, but he had had no practice.

"You are Sir Henry," the voice repeated, "and I am Maurice. I like being Maurice. I am so large and strong. I could drown you in the water-butt, my poor cat—oh, so easily. No, don't spit and swear. It's bad manners—even in a cat."

"Maurice!" shouted Mr. Basingstoke from between the door and the cab.

Maurice, from habit, leaped towards the door.

"It's no use *your* going," said the thing that looked like a giant reflection of Maurice; "it's *me* he wants."

"But I didn't agree to your being me."

"That's poetry, even if it isn't grammar," said the thing that looked like Maurice. "Why, my good cat, don't you see that if you are I, I must be you? Otherwise we should interfere with time and space, upset the balance of power, and as likely as not destroy the solar system. Oh, yes – I'm you, right enough, and shall be, till someone tells you to change from Sir Henry into Maurice. And now you've got to find someone to do it."

("Maurice!" thundered the voice of Mr. Basingstoke.)

"That'll be easy enough," said Maurice.

"Think so?" said the other.

"But I sha'n't try yet. I want to have some fun first. I shall catch heaps of mice!"

"Think so? You forget that your whiskers are cut off—Maurice cut them. Without whiskers, how can you judge of the width of the places you go through? Take care you don't get stuck in a hole that you can't get out of or go in through, my good cat."

"Don't call me a cat," said Maurice, and felt that his tail was growing thick and angry.

"You *are* a cat, you know—and that little bit of temper that I see in your tail reminds me——"

Maurice felt himself gripped round the middle, abruptly lifted, and carried swiftly through the air. The quickness of the movement made him giddy. The light went so quickly past him that it might as well have been darkness. He saw nothing, felt nothing, except a sort of long sea-sickness, and then suddenly he was not being moved. He could see now. He could feel. He was being held tight in a sort of vice—a vice covered with chequered cloth. It looked like the pattern, very much exaggerated, of his school knickerbockers. It *was*. He was being held between the hard, relentless knees of that creature that had once been Sir Henry, and to whose tail he had tied a sardine-tin. Now *he* was Sir Henry, and something was being tied to *his* tail. Something mysterious, terrible. Very well, he would show that he was not afraid of anything that could be attached to tails. The string rubbed his fur the wrong way—it was that that annoyed him, not the string itself; and as for what was at the end of the string, what *could* that matter to any sensible cat? Maurice was quite decided that he was—and would keep on being—a sensible cat.

The string, however, and the uncomfortable, tight position between those chequered knees—something or other was getting on his nerves.

"Maurice!" shouted his father below, and the be-catted Maurice bounded between the knees of the creature that wore his clothes and his looks.

"Coming, father," this thing called, and sped away, leaving Maurice on the servant's bed—under which Sir Henry had taken refuge, with his tin can, so short and yet so long a time ago. The stairs re-echoed to the loud boots which Maurice had never before thought loud; he had often, indeed, wondered that anyone could object to them. He wondered now no longer.

He heard the front door slam. That thing had gone to Dr. Strongitharm's. That was one comfort. Sir Henry was a boy now; he would know what it was to be a boy. He, Maurice, was a cat, and he meant to taste fully all catty pleasures, from milk to mice. Meanwhile he was without mice or milk, and, unaccustomed as he was to a tail, he could not but feel that all was not right with his own. There was a feeling of weight, a feeling of discomfort, of positive terror. If he should move, what would that thing that was tied to his tail do? Rattle, of course. Oh, but he could not bear it if that thing rattled. Nonsense; it was only a sardine-tin. Yes, Maurice knew that. But all the same—if it did rattle! He moved his tail the least little soft inch. No sound. Perhaps really there wasn't anything tied to his tail. But he couldn't be sure unless he moved. But if he moved the thing would rattle, and if it rattled Maurice felt sure that he would expire or go mad. A mad cat. What a dreadful thing to be! Yet he couldn't sit on that bed for ever, waiting, waiting, waiting for the dreadful thing to happen.

"Oh, dear," sighed Maurice the cat. "I never knew what people meant by 'afraid' before."

His cat-heart was beating heavily against his furry side. His limbs were getting cramped—he must move. He did. And instantly the awful thing happened. The sardine-tin touched the iron of the bed-foot. It rattled.

"Oh, I can't bear it, I can't," cried poor Maurice, in a heartrending meaow that echoed through the house. He leaped from the bed and tore through the door and down the stairs, and behind him came the most terrible thing in the world. People might call it a sardine-tin, but he knew better. It was the soul of all the fear that ever had been or ever could be. *It rattled.*

Maurice who was a cat flew down the stairs; down, down—it followed. Oh,

horrible! Down, down! At the foot of the stairs the horror, caught by something—a banister—a stair-rod—stopped. The string on Maurice's tail tightened, his tail was jerked, he was stopped. But the noise had stopped too. Maurice lay only just alive at the foot of the stairs.

It was Mabel who untied the string and soothed his terrors with strokings and tender love-words. Maurice was surprised to find what a nice little girl his sister really was.

"I'll never tease you again," he tried to say, softly—but that was not what he said. What he said was "Purrrr."

"Dear pussy, nice poor pussy, then," said Mabel, and she hid away the sardine-tin and did not tell anyone. This seemed unjust to Maurice until he remembered that, of course, Mabel thought that he was really Sir Henry, and that the person who had tied the tin to his tail was her brother Maurice. Then he was half grateful. She carried him down, in soft, safe arms, to the kitchen, and asked cook to give him some milk.

"Tell me to change back into Maurice," said Maurice, who was quite worn out by his cattish experiences. But no one heard him. What they heard was, "Meaow—Meaow—Meeeaow!"

Then Maurice saw how he had been tricked. He could be changed back into a boy as soon as anyone said to him, "Leave off being a cat and be Maurice again," but his tongue had no longer the power to ask anyone to say it.

He did not sleep well that night. For one thing he was not accustomed to sleeping on the kitchen hearthrug, and the blackbeetles were too many and too cordial. He was glad when cook came down and turned him out into the garden, where the October frost still lay white on the yellowed stalks of sunflowers and nasturtiums. He took a walk, climbed a tree, failed to catch a bird, and felt better. He began also to feel hungry. A delicious scent came stealing out of the back kitchen door. Oh, joy, there were to be herrings for breakfast! Maurice hastened in and took his place on his usual chair.

His mother said, "Down, puss," and gently tilted the chair so that Maurice fell off it. Then the family had herrings. Maurice said, "You might give me some," and he said it so often that his father, who, of course, heard only mewings, said:—

"For goodness' sake put that cat out of the room."

Maurice breakfasted later, in the dust-bin, on herring heads.

But he kept himself up with a new and splendid idea. They would give him milk presently, and then they should see.

He spent the afternoon sitting on the sofa in the dining-room, listening to the conversation of his father and mother. It is said that listeners never hear any good of themselves. Maurice heard so much that he was surprised and humbled. He heard his father say that he was a fine, plucky little chap, but he needed a severe lesson, and Dr. Strongitharm was the man to give it to him. He heard his mother say things that made his heart throb in his throat and the tears prick behind those green cat-eyes of his. He had always thought his parents a little bit unjust. Now they did him so much more than justice

"IT WAS MABEL WHO UNTIED THE STRING AND SOOTHED HIS TERRORS."

"HE LANDED THERE ON HIS FOUR PADDED FEET, LIGHT AS A FEATHER; BUT FATHER WAS NOT PLEASED."

that he felt quite small and mean inside his cat-skin.

"He's a dear, good, affectionate boy," said mother. "It's only his high spirits. Don't you think, darling, perhaps you were a little hard on him?"

"It was for his own good," said father.

"Of course," said mother; "but I can't bear to think of him at that dreadful school."

"Well——," father was beginning, when Jane came in with the tea-things on a clattering tray, whose sound made Maurice tremble in every leg. Father and mother began to talk about the weather.

Maurice felt very affectionately to both his parents. The natural way of showing this was to jump on to the sideboard and thence on to his father's shoulders. He landed there on his four padded feet, light as a feather; but father was not pleased.

"Bother the cat!" he cried. "Jane, put it out of the room."

Maurice was put out. His great idea, which was to be carried out with milk, would

certainly not be carried out in the dining-room. He sought the kitchen, and, seeing a milk-can on the window-ledge, jumped up beside the can and patted it as he had seen Sir Henry do.

"My!" said a friend of Jane's who happened to be there, "ain't that cat clever—a perfect moral, I call her."

"He's nothing to boast of this time," said cook. "I will say for Sir Henry he's not often taken in with a empty can."

This was naturally mortifying for Maurice, but he pretended not to hear, and jumped from the window to the tea-table and patted the milk-jug.

"Come," said the cook, "that's more like it," and she poured him out a full saucer and set it on the floor.

Now was the chance Maurice had longed for. Now he could carry out that idea of his. He was very thirsty, for he had had nothing since that delicious breakfast in the dust-bin. But not for worlds would he have drunk the milk. No. He carefully dipped his right paw in it, for his idea was to make letters with it on the kitchen oil-cloth. He meant to write: "Please tell me to leave off being a cat and be Maurice again," but he found his paw a very clumsy pen, and he had to rub out the first "P" because it only looked like an accident. Then he tried again and actually did make a "P" that any fair-minded person could have read quite easily.

"I wish they'd notice," he said, and before he got the "l" written they did notice.

"Drat the cat," said cook; "look how he's messing the floor up."

And she took away the milk.

Maurice put pride aside and mewed to have the milk put down again. But he did not get it.

Very weary, very thirsty, and very tired of being Sir Henry, he presently found his way to the schoolroom, where Mabel with patient toil was doing her home-lessons. She took him on her lap and stroked him while she learned her French verb. He felt that he was growing very fond of her. People were quite right to be kind to dumb animals. Presently she had to stop stroking him and do a map. And after that she kissed him and put him down and went away. All the time she had been doing the map, Maurice had had but one thought: *Ink!*

The moment the door had closed behind her—how sensible people were who closed doors gently—he stood up in her chair with one paw on the map and the other on the ink. Unfortunately, the inkstand top was made to dip pens in, and not to dip paws. But Maurice was desperate. He deliberately upset the ink—most of it rolled over the table-cloth and fell pattering on the carpet, but with what was left he wrote quite plainly, across the map:—

"Please tell Sir Hen
ry to stop being
a cat and be Mau
rice again."

"There!" he said; "they can't make any mistake about that." They didn't. But they made a mistake about who had done it, and Mabel was deprived of jam with her supper bread.

Her assurance that some naughty boy must have come through the window and done it while she was not there convinced nobody, and, indeed, the window was shut and bolted.

Maurice, wild with indignation, did not mend matters by seizing the opportunity of a few minutes' solitude to write:—

"It was not Mabel
it was Maur
ice I mean Sir Henry,"

because when that was seen Mabel was instantly sent to bed.

"It's not fair!" cried Maurice.

"My dear," said Maurice's father, "if that cat goes on mewing to this extent you'll have to get rid of it."

Maurice said not another word. It was bad enough to be a cat, but to be a cat that was "got rid of"! He knew how people got rid of cats. In a stricken silence he left the room and slunk up the stairs—he dared not mew again, even at the door of Mabel's room. But when Jane went in to put Mabel's light out Maurice crept in too, and in the dark tried with stifled mews and purrs to explain to Mabel how sorry he was. Mabel stroked him and he went to sleep, his last waking thought amazement at the blindness that had once made him call her a silly little kid.

If you have ever been a cat you will understand something of what Maurice endured during the dreadful days that followed. If you have not, I can never make you understand fully. There was the affair of the fishmonger's tray balanced on the wall by the back door—the delicious curled-up whiting; Maurice knew as well as you do that one mustn't steal fish out of other people's trays, but the cat that he was didn't know. There was an inward struggle—and

Maurice was beaten by the cat-nature. Later he was beaten by the cook.

Then there was that very painful incident with the butcher's dog, the flight across gardens, the safety of the plum tree gained only just in time.

And, worst of all, despair took hold of him, for he saw that nothing he could do would make anyone say those simple words that would release him. He had hoped that Mabel might at last be made to understand, but the ink had failed him; she did not understand his subdued mewings, and when he got the cardboard letters and made the same sentence with them Mabel only thought it was that naughty boy who came through locked windows. Somehow he could not spell before anyone—his nerves were not what they had been. His brain now gave him no new ideas. He felt that he was really growing like a cat in his mind. His interest in his meals grew beyond even what it had been when they were a schoolboy's meals. He hunted mice with growing enthusiasm, though the loss of his whiskers to measure narrow places with made hunting difficult. He grew expert in bird-stalking, and often got quite near to a bird before it flew away, laughing at him. But all the time, in his heart, he was very, very miserable. And so the week went by.

"WHEN JANE WENT IN TO PUT MABEL'S LIGHT OUT MAURICE CREPT IN TOO."

Maurice in his cat shape dreaded more and more the time when Sir Henry in the boy shape should come back from Dr. Strongitharm's. He knew—who better?—exactly the kind of things boys do to cats, and he trembled to the end of his handsome half-Persian tail.

And then the boy came home from Dr. Strongitharm's, and at the first sound of his boots in the hall Maurice in the cat's body fled with silent haste to hide in the boot-cupboard.

Here, ten minutes later, the boy that had come back from Dr. Strongitharm's found him.

Maurice fluffed up his tail and unsheathed his claws. Whatever this boy was going to do to him Maurice meant to resist, and his resistance should hurt the boy as much as possible. I am sorry to say Maurice swore softly among the boots, but cat-swearing is not really wrong.

"Come out, you old duffer," said Sir Henry in the boy shape of Maurice. "I'm not going to hurt you."

"I'll see to that," said Maurice, backing into the corner, all teeth and claws.

"Oh, I've had such a time!" said Sir Henry. "It's no use, you know, old chap; I can see where you are by your green eyes. My word, they do shine. I've been caned and shut up in a dark room and given thousands of lines to write out."

"I've been beaten, too, if you come to that," mewed Maurice. "Besides the butcher's dog."

It was an intense relief to speak to someone who could understand his mews.

"Well, I suppose it's Pax for the future," said Sir Henry; "if you won't come out, you won't. Please leave off being a cat and be Maurice again."

And instantly Maurice, amid a heap of goloshes and old tennis bats, felt with a swelling heart that he was no longer a cat. No more of those undignified four legs, those tiresome pointed ears, so difficult to wash, that furry coat, that contemptible tail, and that terrible inability to express all one's feelings in two words — "mew" and "purr."

He scrambled out of the cupboard, and the boots and goloshes fell off him like spray off a bather.

He stood upright in those very chequered knickerbockers that were so terrible when their knees held one vice-like, while things were tied to one's tail. He was face to face with another boy, exactly like himself.

"*You* haven't changed, then — but there can't be two Maurices."

"HE SCRAMBLED OUT OF THE CUPBOARD, AND THE BOOTS AND GOLOSHES FELL OFF HIM LIKE SPRAY OFF A BATHER."

"There sha'n't be; not if I know it," said the other boy; "a boy's life's a dog's life. Quick, before anyone comes.

"Quick what?" asked Maurice.

"Why, tell me to leave off being a boy, and to be Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman again."

Maurice told him at once. And at once the boy was gone, and there was Sir Henry, in his own shape, purring politely, yet with a watchful eye on Maurice's movements.

"Oh, you needn't be afraid, old chap. It's Pax right enough," Maurice murmured in the ear of Sir Henry. And Sir Henry, arching his back under Maurice's stroking hand, replied with a purrrr-meaow that spoke volumes.

"Oh, Maurice, here you are. It *is* nice of you to be nice to Sir Henry, when it was because of him you——"

"He's a good old chap," said Maurice, carelessly. "And you're not half a bad old girl. See?"

Mabel almost wept for joy at this magnificent compliment, and Sir Henry himself took on a more happy and confident air.

Please dismiss any fears which you may entertain that after this Maurice became a model boy. He didn't. But he was much nicer than before. The conversation which he overheard when he was a cat makes him more patient with his father and mother. And he is almost always nice to Mabel, for he cannot forget all that she was to him when he wore the shape of Sir Henry. His father attributes all the improvement in his son's character to that week at Dr. Strongitharm's —which, as you know, Maurice never had. Sir Henry's character is unchanged. Cats learn slowly and with difficulty.

Only Maurice and Sir Henry know the truth—Maurice has never told it to anyone except me, and Sir Henry is a very reserved cat. He never at any time had that free flow of mew which distinguished and endangered the cat-hood of Maurice.

An Elopement Office.

THERE has been a regular epidemic of mysterious elopements in Paris during the past six months. Every guard which stern parents have put about their infatuated daughters has been broken down, and in a twinkling loving couples have been whisked away to conjugal happiness, carried off, apparently, on the wings of Cupid.

Indeed, Cupid has played a most practical and effective part in these runaway marriages, but it is a Cupid of rubber tyres, shining wheels, and powerful motor-power; a Cupid with the speed of Mercury—in short, it is the latest make of racing automobile.

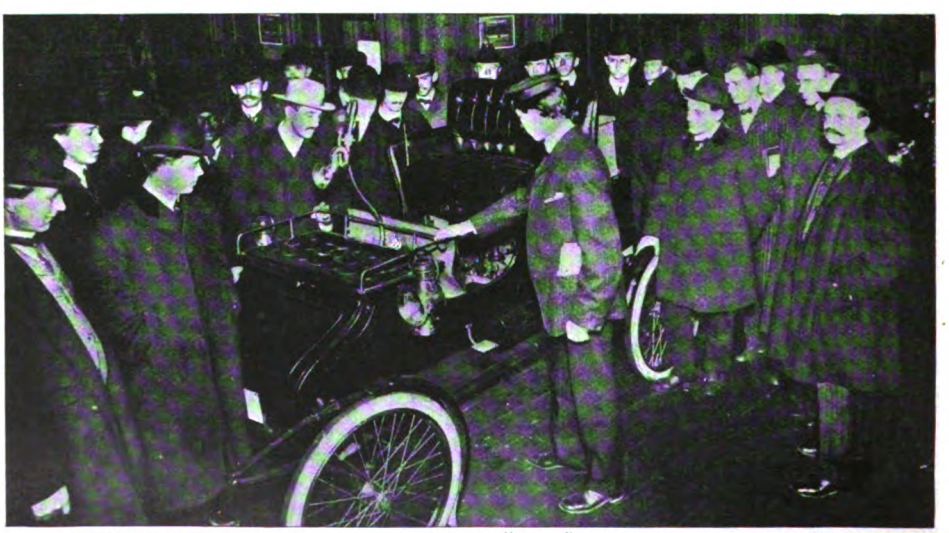
For a long while all that could be wrested from runaway couples was the statement that they had been married in the "Cupid Car." What the Cupid Car was, or where it was to be found, they declined to reveal to any but those whose hearts were torn by "the cruelty of opposing parents."

MLLE. BOB WALTERS, WHO KEEPS THE ELOPEMENT OFFICE. *From a Photograph.*

Somehow the secret leaked out, as even the deepest mysteries will in time, and, lo! there is in Paris a perfectly-equipped "elopement office," with a polished and charming Parisian lady in charge—a regular fairy godmother to the elopers—and her splendid garage is a much-sought port in the rough ocean of true love.

Mlle. Bob Walters is known in Paris as the owner of one of the finest garages in the French capital, and many races have been won by her machines.

Most conspicuous among these is a powerful touring car—a perfect beauty, always in the pink of condition, and ready to start on the wildest race over the hardest roads at a moment's notice—it is the "Cupid."



A PARTY OF BRIDEGROOMS WHO HAVE ELOPED IN THE "CUPID" PAYING THEIR RESPECTS TO THE CAR. *From a Photograph.*

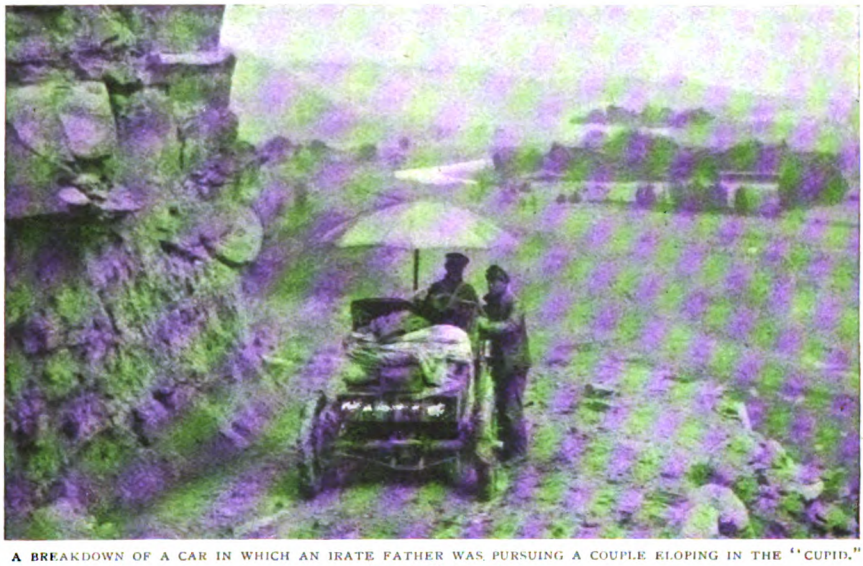
Round the walls of the garage are suit-cases, small trunks, parasols, umbrellas, heavy boots, dainty shoes, rain-coats and top-coats, caps and travelling hats, cupboards containing fine lingerie and boxes filled with every imaginable kind of accessories, filmy veils, powder-puffs, bottles of perfume, boxes of sachets, and even little packages of beauty-patches.

In an adjoining room there is every facility for a hasty lunch, and here there are guide-books and time-tables, hotel directories and road-maps. In short, nothing has been forgotten by Mlle. Bob, as she is called, which would add to the comfort of the couples who come to her for aid in their love affairs.

Sometimes she receives word weeks ahead that her Cupid will be desired on such and such a date. Then the matter of wardrobe, route, and so forth can all be attended to at leisure, but more frequently the couples run into her garage breathless, and incoherently plead for speedy first aid. Then all mademoiselle's ingenuity is roused, and she soothes, assures, and plans. She has the route laid out, the honeymoon planned, a telegram sent to the mayor or curé, rooms at a distant hotel secured, a substantial lunch packed, Cupid run out, Jacques, the chauffeur, equipped, a dainty maid to act as necessary witness instructed, and all four packed into the double-seated car, with the luggage in the tonneau.

After about an hour's respite mademoiselle's services may be again called for—this time in the outer garage. Monsieur, very red of face, very damp of brow, and very fierce of temper, dashes into the garage so innocently famous for its speedy motor-carriages, and excitedly implores mademoiselle to bring out her best car and put her cleverest chauffeur at the wheel. Mademoiselle is all solicitude; she hopes that monsieur has not had bad news. She prays that her car may be of assistance, and little by little, as she again gives orders and bustles about, she learns the father's side of the elopement story.

She may not wilfully lead him astray as to the road to take; indeed, she earnestly asserts that she often helps a little—not enough to cause trouble—in this direction. And who can blame her if Cupid is many horse-power superior to any other car in her garage, or if the lovers have a full two hours' start of "papa"? Surely not the eloping couple. And so her business grows. Cupid is constantly changing his colour and his number. Even his fittings are renewed about once a fortnight, so that although Mlle. Bob's garage is famous throughout Paris among sportsmen, and has a fame of a different order among a number of happily-married young people, as yet the Cupid has not been "spotted." To have the car become familiar would be to materially injure the value of this strange elopement office.



A BREAKDOWN OF A CAR IN WHICH AN IRATE FATHER WAS PURSUING A COUPLE ELOPING IN THE "CUPID."
From a Photograph.

CURIOSITIES.

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

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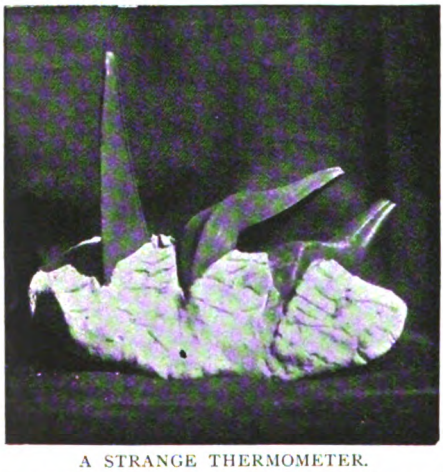
A HOUSE NO MONEY CAN BUY.

THE adjoining photograph is one I took while encamped on a mining claim in the Rocky Mountains, Colorado. The house is an old structure standing on a very rich mining area, known as the Californian Gulch. The ground around it had been worked by diligent miners in the early sixties with wonderful success, and since then every effort has been made to secure the lot, which is about half an acre. Rich syndicates are ever on the alert to purchase it. The price offered by one syndicate was £20,000. Notwithstanding this tempting offer, the owner (a widow) still declines to part with her home.—Mr. J. W. Sloper, 13, Harrington Street, Dublin, Ireland.

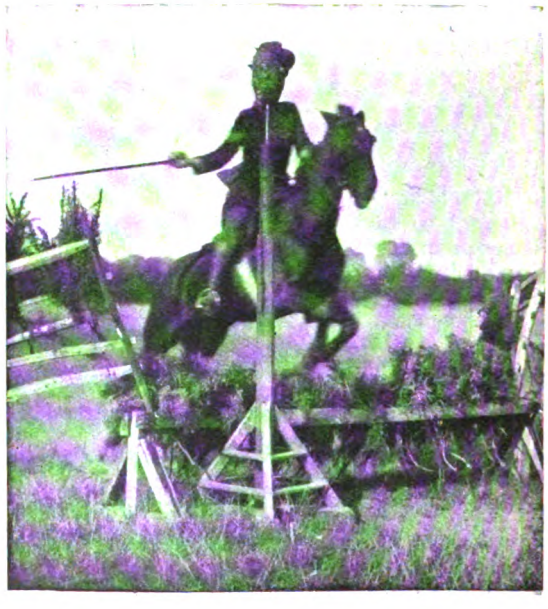


A STRANGE THERMOMETER.

PROBABLY not one person in a thousand would be able to guess the purpose of the peculiar instrument, a photograph of which is reproduced here. That it was a thermometer or a device for measuring heat would never occur to those not familiar with its use. In firing tile and pottery it is necessary to measure the degree of heat applied to the ware in the kiln. Several hundred degrees of heat are required properly to fire the ware, and, of course, the ordinary thermometer would melt and the mercury volatilize long before the required degree of heat had been reached. The ingenuity of man has devised a means, however, for measuring the heat, and this instrument is the means. Three chemical pencils are set in a fire-clay base. Each of these has a resisting power different from either of the others. In the instrument photographed the first pencil had a resisting power of 2,550deg. When the heat of the kiln passed that degree the pencil melted and fell over. The second pencil had a resisting power of 2,570deg., and the fact that this too is wilted is evidence that it has been subjected to a greater degree of heat. The third pencil, with a resisting power of 2,590deg., is standing, which proves that the heat of the kiln in which it was placed was between 2,570deg. and 2,590deg. The ware in this case required more than 2,570deg., but would have been injured by more than 2,590deg. The standing pencil is the guarantee that the fireman did not go beyond the limit. — Mr. Arthur J. Burdick, 727, South Broadway, Los Angeles, California.

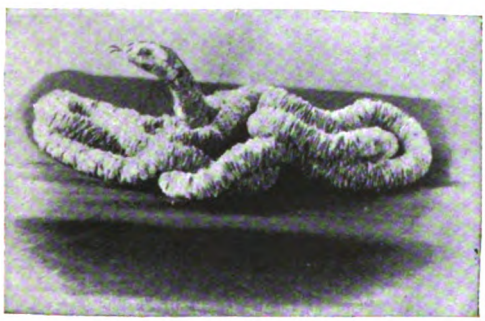
'THE TURK'S HEAD."

THE accompanying photograph was a snap-shot taken by a friend, and is called "Cleaving the Turk's Head." To my surprise I found the Turk's head placed exactly where my own ought to have been. The effect is very odd.—Dragoon, Hounslow.



A REMARKABLE "PRAM."

HEREWITH is a snap-shot taken by my wife during our holiday in Portugal this year. You will notice that the "pram" is made from a chest of drawers turned upside down and the two middle drawers removed. The cord that fastens it to the wheels also acts as the runner for the sun-curtain. The remaining drawers have been reversed and used for holding the child's belongings. The photograph was taken in Oporto, and is an example of necessity being the mother of invention.—Mr. Harry de Beer, 93, London Road, Ipswich.

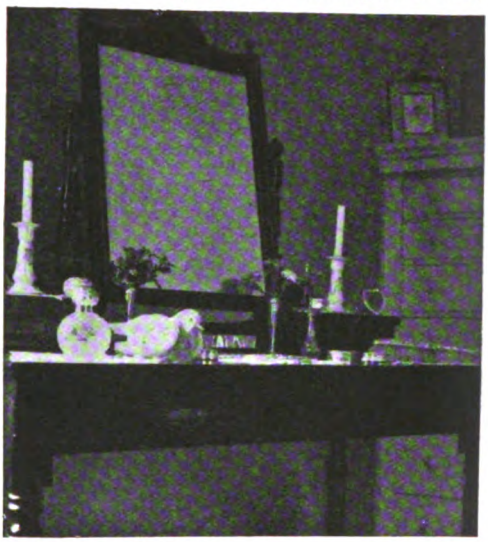


CHAMPION STAMP-SNAKE.

BETWEEN seven and eight years ago I saw in your Magazine a photograph of a snake made of stamps, which I think took a lady nine years to make and was nine feet long. I thought I also would try to make one in my spare time, endeavouring to make it longer and in less time, and now I have great pleasure in sending you a picture post-card of my snake. It has taken me seven years to finish, and it is eleven feet long. In the last two years I have travelled more than half round the world, taking the snake with me to Turkey, Athens, Asia Minor, Italy, and America, and I have collected stamps from all these countries. The head is covered with bits of stamps from each of the countries I have visited. — Miss Fanny L. Halford, 63, Bland Street, Moss Side, Manchester.

A PRETTY DOVE STORY.

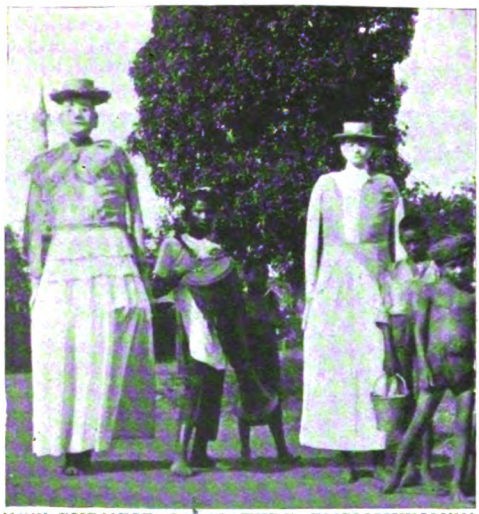
A SHORT while ago a pair of doves started building a nest on my dressing-table, and brought in quantities of twigs. These were repeatedly cleared away, but the birds persisted in returning to the table,



getting most indignant if anyone approached. A box was provided near by, but they firmly refused to move the nest. — Miss Helen Findlater, North Lodge, Edgware, Middlesex.

DO HEDGEHOGS KILL FOWLS?

THE accompanying photograph proves conclusively that hedgehogs will kill and eat poultry. Messrs. John Binns and Son, breeders and exhibitors of black and white rosecomb bantams, of Thornton Road, Bradford, had lost a number of birds, but they attributed the mischief to cats. In order to catch the thief a Samson trap—baited with one of the dead birds—was laid, and the next morning's discovery is shown in the picture. The teeth of the hedgehog had pierced the breast and penetrated the bone, while in its stomach were found the flesh and feathers of another fowl. The photograph was taken by Mr. Binns, Junior.—Mr. S. Oddy, Gilstead, Bingley, Yorkshire.

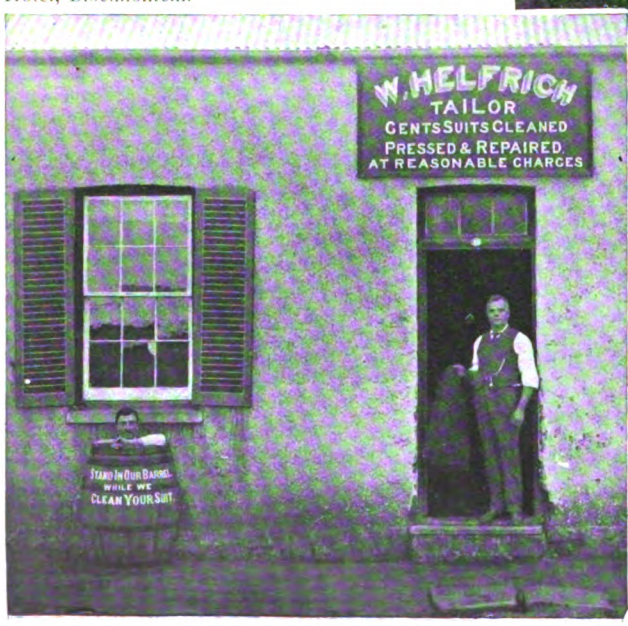


HOW BURMESE CARICATURE ENGLISHWOMEN.

EVERY year in Burma the Burmese have a festival in which they caricature various professions, trades, and castes. The above photograph represents two Englishwomen as seen by the Burmese. They are very ingeniously made of bamboo, stuff, and lace, and are carried by boys, whose legs may be seen protruding from under the skirts. They are about ten feet high, and when seen walking or dancing in the street, to the sound made on the trumpet-shaped drums shown in the photograph, the effect is highly amusing to both the English and Burmese.—Mr. A. F. Warrington, Fair Oak, Shirley Road, Freemantle, Southampton.

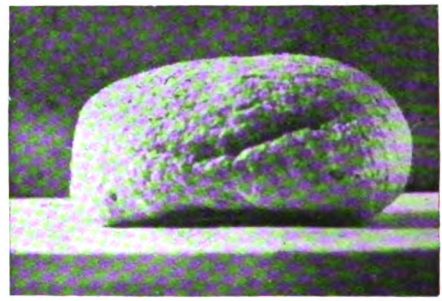
A REMARKABLE ADVERTISEMENT.

I SEND you the photograph of a remarkable clothes-cleaning advertisement that explains itself. The locale is Bloemfontein. — Mr. A. Hand, Queen's Hotel, Bloemfontein.

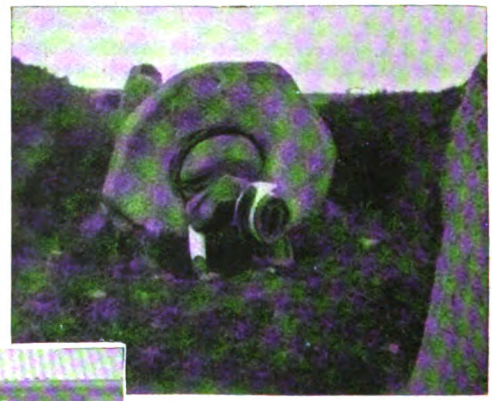


WHAT IS THIS?

THIS odd-looking object was found by my little niece in the midst of driftwood along the New Jersey beach. Its colour is light grey, and its length about three inches. Upon casual observation we thought it to be some marine growth, but careful ex-



amination, and some prodding of the interior with a penknife, revealed printing, which showed that we had to deal with the remains of a telephone directory, all that the sea had left of a pamphlet about two inches thick and with leaves measuring eight by twelve inches. — Mr. Francis J. Ziegler, 4,211, Regent Square, Philadelphia, Pa.



PECULIAR "CURE STONES."

OCCUPYING an isolated position on the moors about five or six miles above Penzance, in Cornwall, a peculiar trio of stones is to be seen. They are arranged in a straight line, the two outside ones being about four feet high and upright, while the centre one is a little lower but much wider. In the last-mentioned there is a round hole large enough to admit of a man passing through. This pile is known as the "Men-an-tol," or "Holed stone." Popular tradition states that anyone crawling through the hole in the centre stone will be for ever immune from rheumatism and allied complaints. In times gone by the country people used to bring their children to the "Holed stone" and pass them through. In all probability the stones, which are of Druidical origin, have some astronomical significance. — Mr. E. Basil Falkner, B.A., B.Sc., Tonbridge School, Kent.

A CURIOUS BET.

THE pillar shown in the centre of this photograph was built as the result of a curious bet, made somewhere about 1817. A gentleman, by name Smelt, wagered that he could build a pillar as good

as the one that previously stood there. This pillar is the only one left standing on the north side of the nave of Whitby Abbey. There are many curious bets on record, but it is doubtful whether the gambling propensities of our ancestors have ever devised a wager with more apparent uselessness than that shown here. —Mr. L. H. Smith, White House, Norwood, Beverley, E. Yorks.

A NEW USE FOR SILK HATS.

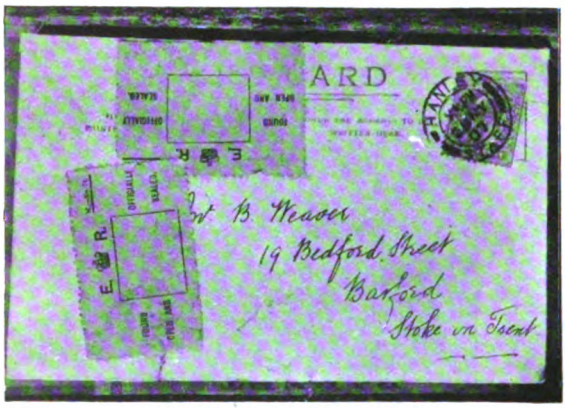
"PLEASE put a copper in my old topper." The clever invention of a little Wimbledon boy, used by him at a bazaar with great success. The idea is a novel one, and it should recommend itself to your many philanthropically-inclined readers. —Mr. John B. Twycross, 83, Lydhurst Avenue, Streatham Hill, S.W.

ENGLISH AS SHE IS WROTE IN CORNWALL.

THE accompanying photograph was taken at Perranporth, a quiet little seaside village on the rocky north coast of Cornwall. The little châlet on the sand-hills dispenses "Te and ot water" to the excursionists who often come hither. To the writer's own knowledge the inscription has stood thus for fifteen years. Was it done in jest or in ignorance?—Mr. Walter Dexter, 40, Ommaney Road, New Cross, S.E.

A ONE-MAN BAND.

THIS picture shows Mr. A. L. Hilson, of 1,349, Broadway, San Francisco, in the act of playing three instruments at once. Besides playing a harmonica with his mouth, Mr. Hilson plays a guitar with his hands and the bass on a bass viol with his feet. He is the only person on record who plays two stringed instruments at one time, and his music is excellent. As the big fire burned his bass viol, he built himself another out of a shoe packing-case, and its tone is quite superior.—Mr. A. T. Moss, Napa, California.

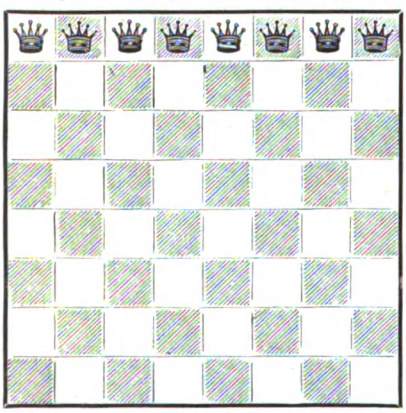


A POST-CARD "FOUND OPEN"!

I SEND you the photograph of a post-card marked "Found open and officially sealed"! Our friend the postman must have been a bit of a wag.—Mr. W. Terrey, 12, Grove Place, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent.

AN INTERESTING CHESS PROBLEM.

I SUGGEST herewith an interesting chess problem. A chess-board and eight Queens are required. The problem is to place the eight Queens on the board so that none of them can take each other.—Mr. C. H. Dent, Broadleigh, Brockenhurst, Hants.



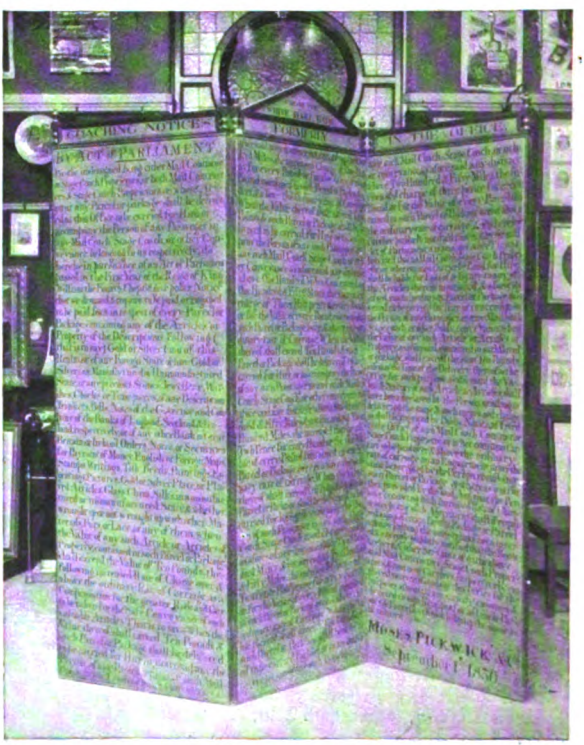
[We will publish what our contributor believes to be the only solution, in the January number. In the meantime, we shall be pleased to hear from any of our readers who can solve the problem unaided. —ED.]

THE ORIGIN OF PICKWICK.

MR. PICKWICK is a household name with us now. How Dickens originated the name is interesting. He adopted it from the name of the firm of Moses Pickwick and Co., who were the proprietors of a service of coaches running between Bath and London. The screen, of which a photograph is here given, is still to be seen at Bath, and originally stood in the hall of the White Hart Hotel; on it are painted the rules and regulations relating to passengers and goods, etc.—Photograph by Mr. Walter Dexter, 40, Ommaney Road, New Cross, S.E.

THE PALACE OF A PEST.

I SEND you a photograph of one of our Christmas decorations. It was found growing on Lorkent Mountain battlefield, and is an immense hornets' nest, built around a holly branch, producing a beautiful effect by the bright red berries and rich green leaves peeping out through the pale grey nest.—Mrs. M. W. Parnell, 250, McCallie Avenue, Chattanooga, Tenn., U.S.A.



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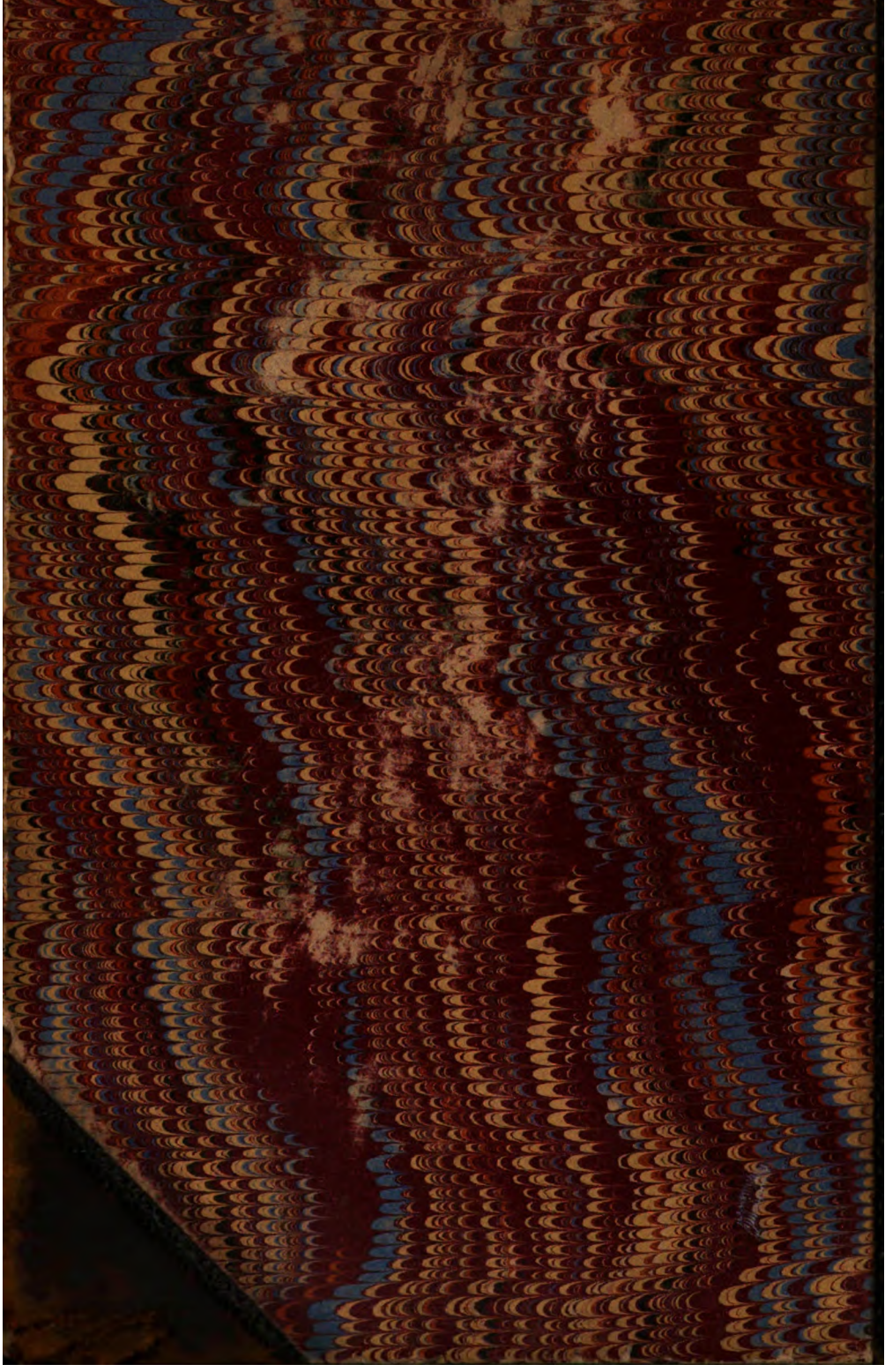
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